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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

February 2015 Shevat/Adar 5775 Volume XXXIX: Number 5 FREE

"Edible Home Landscapes"—a perfect match for Tu B'shevat in the Shmita year

Rabbi Michal Woll, special to the WJN

In celebration of Tu B'Shevat, and in keeping with the teachings of the *Shmita* year, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation and Pardes Hannah will host "Edible Home Landscapes—From Saving Seeds to Harvesting from Your Own Trees" the afternoon of February 1, from 1–3 p.m., at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

This event, which will be an opportunity to study about permaculture and perennial home food gardens, is a natural fit for the Shmita year, which invites Jews to re-consider current food production and land use. "Although the mitzvot for Shmita include letting the land lie fallow, one is instructed and allowed to collect what grows perennially, harvesting only what grows without cultivation," says Carole Caplan, a member of AARC. "The ancient texts point directly to the wisdom and practices now resurfacing around sustainable food systems. Looking at the issue through text helps to connect us back to our roots as Jews, while learning about current sustainable gardening principles makes Judaism relevant to our modern lives in a very tangible way." The February 1 event will include text study, dialogue, hands-on learning and refreshments. The event is free, but registration is requested.

To register, visit http://foodlandjustice-ediblelandscape.eventbrite.com.

"We want to encourage individuals to think beyond grocery stores, farmer's markets and even CSA's, and to imagine healthy foods perennially outside their own kitchen door," says Caplan. To facilitate this, local plant guru Erica Kempter, of Nature and Nurture Seeds, will educate attendees on what is possible, even for the novice gardener. She will cover soils, seeds and perennial plantings that offer beauty and food to home landscaping.

Out of the excitement amongst those working on creating programming for the Shmita year here in Ann Arbor, a newly formed Jewish Alliance for Food, Land and Justice, is taking root. Upcoming events include a visit to ROC in Detroit in partnership with ICPJ (Interfaith Council on Peace and Justice) on February 11 to discuss fair labor practices for restaurant workers, and on June 7, a Youth Farm Education Day/Community Jewish Food Festival.

These events are made possible in part by an Impact Grant from the Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Anyone interested in joining the festival planning committee or volunteering at the event can contact Carole Caplan at caplan.carole@gmail.com. ■

Keeping time during the Holocaust is topic of Frankel Lecture

Yaffa Klugerman, special to the WJN

Imagine Jewish life without a Jewish calendar. Suppose, for a minute, that we had no idea when to celebrate holidays and observe fasts. When would we blow the shofar? When would we light the menorah? When would we eat matzah?

Alan Rosen

That, says Holocaust scholar Alan Rosen, was the problem faced by Jews in ghettos, camps, and in hiding during the Holocaust.

How did Jews develop ways to track time? Rosen's upcoming talk, "Killing Time, Saving Time: Calendars and the Holocaust," will answer this question and uncover the innovative methods Jews used. The lecture, which will take place on February 17, is sponsored by the Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan.

The author or editor of ten books, Rosen became interested in timekeeping during the Holocaust after interviewing victims who said they placed a high value on keeping track of the sacred days of the Jewish calendar. He conducted his research using Jewish calendars from public and personal archives from that time, and discovered that people were extremely resourceful with the ways in which they determined the proper dates for Jewish observance.

"Almost no one has given attention to wartime calendars and the amazing aspects of wartime life they reveal," he said. "So I've had to assemble my own inventory of these calendars from the ground up."

Keeping calendars during the Holocaust, says Anita Norich, U-M's Tikva Frymer-Kensky Collegiate Professor, sheds light on how people tried to sustain tradition and some modicum of control during unbearably chaotic times.

"People ground themselves in the calendar," said Norich, who arranged Rosen's visit. "What happens to your sense of time under such traumatic conditions? How do

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TBE to host Scholar-in-Residence Keren McGinity

Avital Ostfield, special to the WJN

Temple Beth Emeth will host this year's Scholar-in-Residence Keren McGinity, author of *Marrying Out, Jewish Men, Intermarriage, and Fatherhood*, Thursday–Friday, February 19–20. The weekend is sponsored by the Melvin and Lois Levy Endowment.

When American Jewish men intermarry—goes the common assumption—they and their families are "lost" to the Jewish religion. In her provocative book, Keren R. McGinity shows that it is not necessarily so. She looks at intermarriage and parenthood through the eyes of a post-World War II cohort of Jewish men and discovers what intermarriage has meant to them and their families. She finds that these husbands strive to bring up their children as Jewish without losing their heritage. Marrying Out argues that the "gendered ethnicity" of intermarried Jewish men, growing out of their religious and cultural background, enables them to raise Jewish children. McGinity's book is a major breakthrough in understanding Jewish men's experiences as husbands and fathers, how Christian women navigate their roles and identities while married to them, and what needs to change for American Jewry to flourish.

Keren McGinty

McGinity will present her research on Thursday, February 19, at 7 p.m. Her visit to TBE will close with a dinner in her honor hosted for the community at Temple Beth Emeth on Friday, February 20, at 5:30 p.m., followed by services. RSVP to tbe@templebethemeth.org for the talks and dinner. Both events are open to the public and are free of charge. ■

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Community

JFS to host Kids Care Fair, March 15

Sarah Schneider Hong, special to the WJN

On Sunday, March 15, from 2–5 p.m., Jewish Family Services will host the JFS Kids Care Fair, a fun family service-learning event to directly benefit the JFS food pantry and counseling services for families. The Kids Care Fair will be held at the Travis Pointe Country Club in Ann Arbor and will engage and inform children and youth in the community about service and giving back. As the event tagline suggests, JFS feels the Kids Care Fair is important "Because today's kids who care are tomorrow's leaders."

Activities at the event will include a food pantry scavenger hunt, disability awareness and sensitivity activities, a musical instrument petting zoo, learning about water conservation while swimming in the heated indoor pool, kids/family yoga, "Strong Moms, Strong Girls" programming, reading nook and story-time, and multiple themed arts and crafts stations focusing on values such as gratitude, "welcoming the stranger," and kindness to older adults. JFS is happy to be partnering with many local community organizations to deliver this important event. The event activities are designed for children ages 2–10 and their families, but there is an additional layer of service-learning for "the big kids." Older community youth from local organizations are themselves planning, organizing, and executing activity stations at the Kids Care Fair. In this way, JFS seeks to create an event that is by kids and for kids, and is entirely focused on the mitzvah of service.

Kids Care Fair activity partners include The Ann Arbor Symphony, Beth Israel Congregation, Hebrew Day School, The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, The Junior League of Ann Arbor, Temple Beth Emeth and others. In addition to the many hands-on activities at the Kids Care Fair, the event will feature a performance by Wild Swan Theater, Ann Arbor's family focused theater group. None of this would be possible without the generous funding from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, via the 2014 Impact Fund $10,000 grant awarded to JFS to rebuild capacity on Jewish Family Life Education. With this grant money, JFS created a new position entirely devoted to bringing high-quality family educational programming to the local Jewish community. Programs address issues of interest across the Jewish lifecycle, from children to older adults.

Not only will the JFS Kids Care Fair educate and engage youth in service-learning, but it will also directly support families in the community. JFS Executive Director Anya Abramzon says, "As the Ann Arbor Jewish community's social service agency, we at JFS know about the rewards of giving back and also about the myriad needs of our community. We hope the Kids Care Fair will give young people the chance to learn and experience more about serving others and act as a springboard for future charitable deeds and projects." In fact, the JFS Kids Care Fair will serve as the kick-off event for year-long service learning opportunities for children, families and youth at JFS via the new "Creating Community Program."

When JFS conceived of this new limb of volunteerism and service-learning for youths, the agency applied for grant funding from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's Youth Council for support. Their response, in the form of a generous $5.000 grant award, was a resounding endorsement of the new JFS program, validating the community's need and desire for this type of work. The grant from the Youth Council, which provides Ann Arbor high school students with unique opportunities in philanthropy and community service, will support not only the JFS Kids Care Fair March 15 event, but will also help fund the ongoing Creating Community Program which will offer six to ten smaller scale youth service projects in a 12 month period. JFS will be assembling a council of teen volunteers from the community who are interested in leading the new program alongside JFS staff.

Tickets are on sale now for the Kids Care Fair. Sliding scale tickets are available online at the time of registration. For more information about the JFS Kids Care fair and to register, visit www.jfsannarbor.org/kids-care-fair. Any teens interested in learning more about participating in the Creating Community Program teen volunteer planning council should contact Sarah Hong at sarah.hong@jfsannarbor.org for more information and to apply. ■

Open house and open enrollment at the ECC

Peretz Hirshbein, special to the WJN

The JCC Early Childhood Center (ECC) will hold an open house for prospective families at 6:30 p.m., on Wednesday, February 25. Parents attending the open house can learn about the Infant/Toddler and Preschool programs from ECC staff, and get to chat with parents of currently enrolled children. Applications for childcare and pre-school programs for the 2015–2016 school year will be accepted beginning Monday, March 2.

The ECC has been offering high quality early childhood care and education to the Ann Arbor community for over 25 years, providing its families a safe, warm, child-centered Jewish learning community where children and adults explore ideas, develop skills, and gain knowledge together. The ECC offers programs for children ages two months to five years.

As a program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the ECC's teacher to child ratios are very low, ranging from 1:3 for infants to 1:7 for preschoolers. Language and literacy, math, science, social studies, and physical development are combined with Jewish celebrations and values to create an integrated curriculum.

Wait lists for 2015–16 infants groups have already formed. For information about enrolling at the ECC or set up a personal tour, contact Early Childhood Director Peretz Hirshbein at 971-0990 or ecc@jccfed.org. ■

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2935 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
voice: 734/971-1800
e-mail: WJN.editor@gmail.com
www.washtenawjewishnews.org

Editor and Publisher
Susan Kravitz Ayer

Calendar Editor
Claire Sandler

Advertising Manager
Gordon White

Design and Layout
Dennis Platte

Staff Writers
Mary Bilyeu, Sandor Slomovits, Rochel Urist

Contributing Writers
Rabbi Ilana Baden, Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, Hadar Dohn, Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Zvi Harel, Peretz Hirshbein, Yaffa Klugerman, Rafael Medoff, Avital Ostfield, Mae Sander, Sean Savage, Sarah Schneider Hong, Rabbi Julie Schonfeld, Alina Dain Sharon, David Shtulman, Andrea Siegel, Clara Silver, Elliot Sorkin, Tim Grimes, Rabbi Michal Woll

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JCC expanding active adult opportunities

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor is expanding its program offerings for post-career or twilight-career adults, who have flexible schedules and more time to engage in personal growth opportunities. Social worker Leah Zaas has joined the JCC staff as the part-time director of adult services, and is working in conjunction with active community members to build new adult micro-communities around shared interests and social connections. Initial ideas were generated at a wine and cheese event hosted by Nancy Margolis and Phyllis Herzig.

"Active Adults" at lunch with Chef Alex Young of Zingerman's Roadhouse

JCC Executive Director Jeff Baden believes that the JCC is in a great position to reach out to active, retired adults, who "already enjoy the JCC's cultural arts and music offerings, but might not think of the JCC as a place to meet their social and recreational needs." Some enrichment programs will be offered on Thursday afternoons at the JCC building. As a kickoff event, the JCC will host a theater trip to see the Broadway musical, *Once*, at the Fisher Theater later this month. In March, the Adult Department will offer a casino trip. Zaas notes that more events at the JCC are also being planned, including, "a photography workshop with Jena McShane on how to take the perfect photo. Following the class, participants will have a few weeks to take photos and submit them for an exhibit at the JCC's Herb and Carol Amster Gallery." Also in the works will be small group classes, trips to area museums and galleries, as well as additional social opportunities. Anyone interested in sharing ideas or getting more involved should contact Leah Zaas by calling 971-0990 or emailing her at leahzaas@jccfed.org. ■

"Nourish Yourself" with Darlene Sosenko at Women's Circle gathering

Mae E. Sander, special to the WJN

My goals as a health coach and fitness trainer are to help women to take care of themselves and to become able to take care of other people," says Darlene Sosenko. In an interactive talk to the Jewish Women's Circle on February 4, Sosenko will elaborate on these goals, which she describes as "paying attention to working out, eating well, and choosing activities because they are right for you."

Also at this meeting, titled "Nourish Yourself," Esther Goldstein, JWC organizer, will talk about the spiritual dimension of taking care of oneself. Both Goldstein and Sosenko stress that mindfulness of both body and soul can contribute to finding out what we are passionate about.

"Just one conversation can change your life," Sosenko says. "If any one piece of trying to nourish yourself is missing, you can find a better way. I help people get out of the mindset that they have to do a particular exercise or eat a particular food. Everyone should seek an exercise routine that they love, should eat foods that they love, and should feel confident preparing food for the people they love. I help people to explore new options for nutrition and goal-oriented exercise."

"You can nourish yourself by doing things for someone else," Sosenko advises. "Eat well, exercise appropriately, and recognize that everyone has different needs. Taking care of yourself and your needs is like watering a plant and understanding what care will make it grow."

"Meeting spiritual goals is also like watering a plant over time and understanding its needs, " says Goldstein. "The theme of all our meetings this year is mindfulness, both spiritual and physical. Darlene's approach to knowing yourself, eating right, and using techniques such as breathing exercises and meditation are all compatible with our theme."

Darlene Sosenko

Sosenko is certified as a health coach, a weight-loss specialist, a personal trainer, and an instructor of yoga and Pilates. In her practice, she develops a program for clients to help them define their goals and accomplish them through fitness, self-care, and getting to the point where they love what's good for them. Participants are welcome to bring questions about nutrition and exercise to the meeting.

"Nourish Yourself" with an interactive presentation by Darlene Sosenko and additional thoughts by Esther Goldstein will take place February 4, 7:30 to 9 p.m., at the home of Prue Rosenthal. Donation requested: $10. Spaces are limited. To sign up for this meeting, be informed of the address, and receive future invitations from the Jewish Women's Circle, join the Jewish Women's Circle Facebook group. The Jewish Women's Circle provides an opportunity for Jewish women to meet new friends, socialize, and learn about a variety of issues. It is open to all, no affiliation necessary. ■

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JFS volunteers deliver meals on Christmas day

Sarah Schneider Hong, special to the WJN

On December 25, 2014, Santa got a helping hand from Jewish Family Services and a group of warm-hearted volunteers. Eighteen families from the community, along with three JFS employees and one Meals on Wheels volunteer, came together to deliver meals to homebound older adults in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.

The James Family is ready to load their car

Checking coolers at headquarters before delivering the meals

While JFS has organized this annual holiday project for many years, it is the volunteers donating their time and efforts on Christmas Day who make the event so special by bringing meals and cheer to those in need. Typically, Meals on Wheels dispatches their own dedicated volunteers to distribute hundreds of meals weekly, six days a week. The JFS-coordinated volunteer effort enabled staff and volunteers from the University of Michigan-based Meals on Wheels program to spend the day celebrating or simply relaxing with their families.

JFS staff members began planning for the holiday project in October 2014. Staff reached out to past volunteers, the broader network of JFS supporters and volunteers, and visited Meals on Wheels (and conducting a volunteer meal delivery) to learn more about their well-run operation and how to manage it smoothly in their stead. The response from potential volunteers was enthusiastic. All reported it was a rewarding and positive experience, returning to the main office after meal delivery with empty coolers and big smiles.

Some of the families who participated in 2014 had volunteered before and have made this an annual family tradition. Children as young as five years old joined their families, and several young people who first participated as grade-schoolers and are now college students returned to volunteer. Many dedicated adult participants have been delivering meals for years; for others, this was their first Christmas Day spent volunteering with JFS and Meals on Wheels.

Anyone interested in delivering meals to homebound older adults during the year should contact the Ann Arbor Meals on Wheels staff directly at 998-6686. Those who would like to participate on December 25, 2015, should contact Danielle Schilhaneck at JFS (danielles@jfsannarbor.org) to have your name placed on the list for notification. Those who would like to learn more about the many ways to volunteer with JFS throughout the year, should also contact Schilhaneck. ■

Together we do extraordinary hings

By David Shtulman

I have been thinking lately about how much life has changed since September 11, 2001 and I have not been having happy thoughts. There are inconveniences I resent that have become a routine part of life. I used to enjoy waiting for my guests at the airport gate. I would watch the people and greet my guests as they got off the plane. Now I sit in the cell phone lot and wait for them to call before searching for them in the crowd at the curb.

I remember when they wouldn't confiscate your shampoo at security if the bottle was larger than three ounces, or your water bottle if you had already begun to drink from it. I remember when it didn't take 45 minutes to enter a stadium because of the security checks on the bags you bring in. I remember when Jewish buildings did not need armed security guards. And I remember when television cartoons like *South Park* and movies like the *Interview* were not canceled when some anonymous email threatens bad things will happen.

I have come to terms with security-related inconveniences, even if I doubt the effectiveness of many of them. I am having a much more difficult time accepting the fear that I feel is infecting our country. When the threat of terrorism forces us to change how we live, then terror has won whether the attacks ever occur or not. We are being conditioned to act with an overabundance of caution, political correctness and care not to upset people who might want to hurt us; even to accept responsibility for the hatred directed towards us.

In the Jewish community I see a similar scenario playing out. The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) is being used to intimidate the Jewish community. Anti-Israel protests and demonstrations create an atmosphere that intimidates many Jewish students into silence or makes them feel guilty about their support for Israel. Some students who openly advocate for Israel are made to feel unwelcome and vulnerable.

Hillel, by mission a Jewish pro-Israel student organization, is challenged by Jewish and non-Jewish students alike to sponsor anti-Israel programs or be accused of not being "open." A surprising number of people support this position. Would these same people accuse the Black Student Union of being closed-minded because they refused to sponsor a program featuring a White Power advocate? The idea is absurd.

The BDS movement in academic associations has enjoyed minimal success, but has foisted itself on many academic conferences. As a result, it has become legitimate to question Israel's very right to exist in academic circles and on university campuses that would never question the right of any other country. Accusations without factual basis are used to justify boycotts of Israel. Academic rigor is not required. Freedom of expression makes the most hateful voices acceptable. At the same time, it protects the rights of Israel's enemies to protest, disrupt and even threaten any voices with which they disagree.

I recently read an article by an Israeli (I apologize that I cannot remember the author's name) who wrote about his experience speaking to a Jewish audience in the United States only a few days after the murderous attack on Jews at prayer in a synagogue in West Jerusalem. He expressed amazement that so many audience members could accept the massacre of Jews as understandable, but couldn't abide the idea of an Israeli occupation. When did killing Jews become an acceptable response to a political dispute, he asked.

Where is our justifiable anger? Where is our sense of outrage?

On the day of this writing, three Islamist terrorists attacked a French weekly newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo,* murdering 12 people and wounding 11 more. The satirical newspaper regularly lampoons many issues including religious issues. Their offices were firebombed in 2011 after an issue made fun of Sharia Law. When asked if he would change the content of his paper, editor and cartoonist Stephane Charbonnier replied, "I would rather die standing than live on my knees." Today he did.

Voices are already being heard saying "they brought it on themselves," "they should have known better," or explaining how offensive it is to Muslims to have their faith and their prophet criticized. It is just as offensive to criticize and mock Christianity, Judaism or other faiths. But in a free society, we are allowed to do such things. Those we offend can stop buying the paper, turn off the television, or be offensive in return. They cannot murder people in the name of their God. And if they do, we must not make excuses for their actions. We should stand together in condemnation and express our own outrage. Not with violence, but with a unanimous voice that says your sensitivities do not outweigh our freedoms.

My hope is that we, too, will stand together in solidarity and with outrage when our freedoms are threatened. We will proudly state that we as Jews have the same right to a state as everyone else, to live in safety in that state and to take the steps necessary to secure that safety. We will not apologize for our beliefs or our politics and we will not "understand" those who attack Jews, whether they live in Israel, in Europe, or here in the United States.

Let me be completely clear about my position. I am not saying that Jews or Israel are beyond reproach. I am not saying Israel should not be held accountable for its actions just as every other nation in the world must be held accountable. But we should not be apologetic for her policy mistakes any more than we are apologetic for American policy mistakes or the mistakes of any other country. Nor should we feel afraid to speak out on behalf of Israel's secure existence or feel obligated to host speakers that challenge her existence.

Nobody is perfect. No state is perfect. We do not expect perfection from anyone else and we cannot expect it from ourselves. We should vigorously debate our disagreements and work to correct our failings. But we must never allow ourselves to be intimidated or to be made guilty for having failings. Nor should we allow our differences to divide us because only together, we can do extraordinary things. ■

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JCLP students learn the power of stories

Andrea Siegel, special to WJN

What do stories have to do with Jewish leadership? A lot, it turns out. Graduate students in the University of Michigan's Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP), at the School of Social Work, have spent much of this academic year learning about the power of Jewish stories for community building. This theme will culminate with a public storytelling event for JCLP's annual Communal Conversation in mid-March.

JCLP students also listened to stories told during the cohort's trip to Washington, D.C. for the Jewish Federation of North America's General Assembly this past December. Students met with national leaders, including Natan Sharansky and Ruth Messinger. The students ventured out of the conference to hear from young African-American and Jewish teenagers engaged in social justice training through Operation Understanding DC. Rachel Lazar, deputy director of the Religious Action Center, shared with JCLP students how she encourages clergy members from a variety of faith groups—liberal and conservative—to explore their own personal narratives for building unexpected interfaith legislative coalitions.

JCLP students at the G.A., December 2014

The Jewish stories to which JCLP students have been exposed this year are both ancient and modern. A number of JCLP students have taken courses with Haya Bar-Itzhak, professor of literature and folklore at the University of Haifa; she is the Schusterman Professor of Israeli Studies and is visiting the Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies this year. Last semester, JCLP student Emily Meister, for instance, researched ancient Jewish legends (*midrashim*) in Hebrew on the biblical book of Ruth for Dr. Bar-Izhak's course "Women and Femininity in Jewish Folk Literature." She then made a presentation to fellow JCLP students about the relevance of Ruth's story for the field of Jewish communal service, given recent national controversies about selected cases of abuse. "What can we learn from Ruth's character about how to view the conversion process?" Meister asked. "How can we make sure that our community is a safe and comfortable space for converts?"

In January, local Jewish community donors came to JCLP's weekly professional development seminar to talk about how their life journeys have impacted their values for giving. In February, JCLP students will share their own family stories with one another as a way to create the basis for collectively tackling challenging topics such as Israel/Palestine and inter-partnered relationships.

In March, JCLP's graduating students will produce the 2015 Communal Conversation, an annual event for the public. The event, titled "Maggid: Stories of the Present Day Jew," will highlight the stories of local community members. Reflecting on their planning for the event, JCLP students Emily White and Haviva Greenbaum recently noted, "The measure of a story's worth is not in its glamour, its flash or its fame; rather, the value of a story is in the imprint it has left on its teller and those who bear witness to its telling. Our voice is our legacy; one's story is the story of our people. Retelling keeps a story alive, invites it into the present and lends its lessons to inspire others." Additional information about the March event is available on JCLP's website, http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/jewish-communal-leadership-program. ■

Emily White (JCLP current student) speaking with Chris Hopson (OUDC teen) at JCLP's Shabbat dinner in December with Operation Understanding DC.

The Norman and Esther Allan Foundation: friends of Hebrew Day School

Hadar Dohn, special to WJN

The Norman and Esther Allan Foundation supports day school education. The foundation has been a supporter of Hebrew Day School's musical performances. HDS' music program begins in the gan (kindergarten) and develops throughout the years. All the classes engage in weekly vocal lessons and beginning in third grade, students learn to play an instrument—recorders in third and fourth grade, and strings in fifth. An eclectic after-school Klez Kids band is offered as enrichment for students who wish to play klezmer music. Embedded in the arts curriculum are performances. The Allan Foundation's support enables the HDS students to experience first hand the skills needed to be a performer: from reading the music and practice, to confidence and poise on stage. Sponsored events include HDS' Music Festival, Klez Kids performances for SPICE, the JCC's senior gathering, and graduation, to name a few.

This year, the Hebrew Day School received a new substantial gift from the Norman and Esther Allan Foundation to support the implementation of a comprehensive new math curriculum at HDS. The Foundation will provide HDS with an additional $93,000 (spread over three years) to fund curriculum research, teacher training and mentoring, and acquisition of the technology needed to support the new program.

Third and Fourth Grade Recorders in concert

Klez Kids performing at the Music Festival

The new curriculum will enable HDS to provide greater consistency and continuity in mathematics education over the life cycle of each student's time at HDS and will be an important part of HDS' continuing efforts to assure that every child at HDS receives an excellent education.

HDS is deeply appreciative of the Allan Foundation for their continued support.

For more information or to schedule a personal tour, contact Ali Reingold, director or admissions and marketing, admissions@hdsaa.org or call 971-4633. ■

Nahalal delegation visit to Ann Arbor a huge success

Rabbi Ilana Baden, special to the WJN

The Chanukah season was even more joyous this year for the 2014 Ann Arbor-Nahalal Student Exchange program families. This year, the 16 local teens who participated in the trip to Nahalal , Israel, last year were able to share the holiday spirit with nine of their friends from Israel who journeyed to Ann Arbor as part of this initiative.

Keren Shachar and Tema Cohen

The Jewish Federation's Ann Arbor-Nahalal Student Exchange program is a two-part exchange in which ninth grade students from Ann Arbor spend a week in February in Moshav Nahalal. The following school year, those students host their Israeli counterparts for a visit to Ann Arbor. The Student Exchange, which was established in 2010, is funded by the Federation's Partnership2Gether Community-to-Community allocation. The Ann Arbor-Nahalal Partnership is an integral part of the Michigan-Central Galilee Partnership2Gether program led by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

On Wednesday, December 18, nine Israeli teens from Nahalal, landed in Detroit with their two adult chaperones, Einat Rafaeli and Drorit Einav. The delegation was greeted by members of the Ann Arbor community and then made their way to the opening lunch at the JCC.

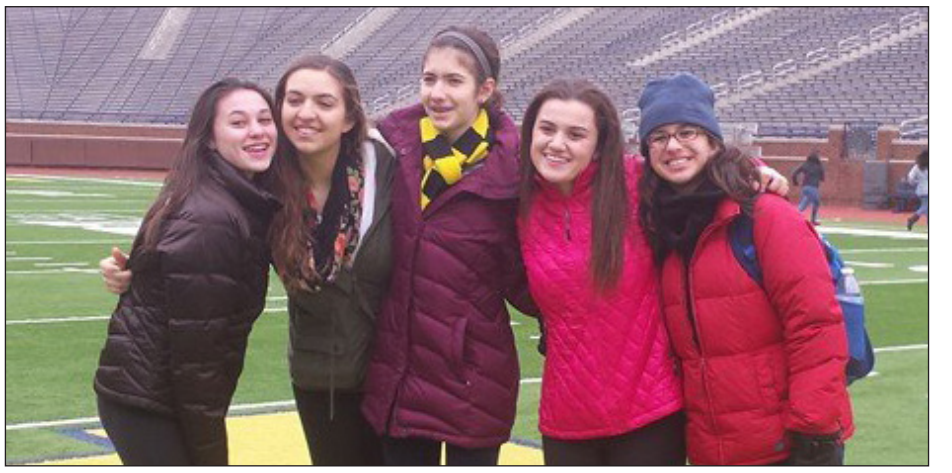
The Ann Arbor students wanted their Israeli counterparts to experience what it is like living in Ann Arbor as a Jewish American. Therefore, the visit was comprised of activities that addressed Jewish life, cultural life, academic life, and general teen-age life.

In terms of experiencing Jewish life, the group visited such places as the Ann Arbor JCC, Hebrew Day School, and the JCC Early Childhood Center. The delegation also spent time at Temple Beth Emeth, where they talked with Rabbi Bob Levy about what Jewish life is like in America. Over the weekend, the group toured the Holocaust Memorial Center with Robin Axelrod, the Center's director of education, and experienced the West Bloomfield JCC. Furthermore, the Israelis got a glimpse of what it is like to be a Jewish college student during their time at the University of Michigan Hillel with Israeli Fellow Liraz Cohen.

The delegation also visited the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village. Other activities included eating at Zingerman's Deli, a tour of the University of Michigan campus stadium and attending a women's basketball game at the Crisler Center. The students were able to spend significant time at various local high schools.

In addition to these experiences, the teens also enjoyed some pure fun time. They had a great time skating at Veterans Memorial Ice Arena and had a blast at the Sky Zone trampoline park in Canton. They also enjoyed their shopping excursions at the Briarwood Mall and Arborland, and they bonded over painting "the rock" at the corner of Washtenaw and Hill Streets. The best, however, was when they were able to be together at the Solomon residence for their closing night's slumber party.

The next Student Exchange visit will take place in just a few weeks. On February 12, a new group of 16 ninth graders will travel to Nahalal with the Federation's Director of Community Engagement, Rabbi Ilana Baden, and the Ann Arbor Community-to-Community chairperson, Eva Solomon. Community member Neal Elyakin will also serve as chaperone for this visit. ■



Tema Cohen, Julia Friedman, Miriam Siegel, Kennedy Lieberman, and Yuval Arvel at the University of Michigan football stadium

Shachar Shurkey, Zoe Koster-Mockeridge, Ron Bentov, Matt Lieberman, and Avihu Kodesh at Veteran's Ice Arena

The group enjoyed painting "the rock" on Washtenaw Avenue

How is a person like a tree? *"Man is compared to the tree in the field."* (Deut. 20:19)

Rabbi Aaron Goldstein, special to the WJN

This year on February 4, Jews will celebrate the holiday of the trees, Tu B'Shevat (15th of Shevat). We celebrate the holiday by: 1. Eating fruits especially the fruits that Israel has been blessed, and 2. Not saying *Tachnun* (asking for forgiveness) in the prayer services

All of this tells us that there is a deep connection between trees and people. How so?

We are in the crowning category of Creation and trees are from the category of vegetation. Vegetation is lower than mankind, and even lower than the animal category between the two. So why did the Torah choose to compare mankind to a tree that is so much lower on the creation hierarchy? When we look at the vegetation kingdom, which includes the trees, there must be an important lesson if the Torah mentions trees and mankind in a comparison.

The nature of the world of vegetation is that it is always attached to its source of life—which is the earth. True, mankind, and even the animal kingdom, also receive their sustenance from the earth. Mankind and animals were created from the Earth. As it says in Ecclesiastes, everything came from the Earth. However, there is a significant difference in another respect. Mankind and animals aren't bound to their source. They are mobile—even able to pursue long migrations far from their original home. In the world of vegetation a plant must always be directly attached to the Earth. If they are detached from the Earth, the source of their life, they will pass away and wilt. This is the main, unique, quality of vegetation and also the lesson that we must learn from them.

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

Within the world of vegetation we find the following theme expressed most obviously in trees. Trees keep living, tolerate all of the different seasons of the year and keep producing fruit year after year. This is different from much of the vegetative world which has its particular productive season followed by a die-off. The trees show their tremendous connection of being bound to their source—the Earth. Despite being subjected to the buffeting of the rigors of the changing seasons, the trees stay strong and continue on year after year because they are securely bound to their source.

So taking the analogy comparing the trees in the field to human beings, a Jew's true essence cannot be detached from its source. The soul of a Jew has to be constantly attached to its source of life. Without this attachment, true life does not exist. This is what we learn from the trees- to be securely attached to our source of life. And what is the source of life for us? The answer is: The Torah. As the Torah tells us in Deuteronomy 30:20, Torah is our life and from Torah, we draw the life for our soul. Only a minority of Jews study Torah on a constant basis - meaning day and night. The majority of Jews cannot afford to study Torah day and night. The Torah prescribes that this majority of Jews leave the "tent" of Torah study and go into the world and make a living to provide for their family. This is part of their Godly mission to make this world a place for God to dwell.

Even though the majority of Jews are not studying Torah on a constant basis but are out in the world making a living, they still need to be reminded of their resemblance to the tree in the field. A tree is above the Earth but it is also constantly connected, via its roots, to the Earth. It is similar to mankind. Even though we are running around doing all sorts of things to provide for our family, we still have to remind ourselves about our roots. There was a time when most of everyone's day was spent learning Torah. That should be an inspiration to continue one's work even when Torah study is relatively unseen - as roots below ground are unseen but are essential for the maintenance of life and continued growth of the tree.

The experience of learning Torah earlier in our lives should not be merely reminding us of days gone-by as a pleasant memory. We have to feel that we are now, in the present tense, still connected to Torah. Just as the leaves, branches and fruit of a tree are apparently distant from its root system under the ground; the tree still needs the roots as the source of its life. So do we need to realize that the Torah is our root system and source of our life despite the more obvious "above ground" aspects that are necessary to make a living. We should study Torah as much as we are able. In the morning and the evening are best. This learning should permeate the rest of our day with the inspiration and instruction from the root of our life – Torah.

This is the lesson we learn from the trees on Tu B'Shevat. We should connect ourselves, according to the will of God, with Torah and then we can live a holy and meaningful life.

Have a happy and meaningful holiday! ■

Am I Charlie?

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, special to the WJN

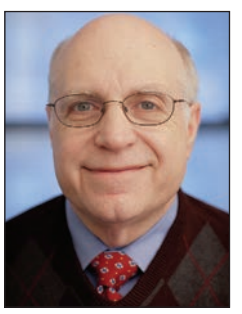
Author's note: This article is based on a sermon I delivered at Beth Israel Congregation on Shabbat morning, January 10. The sermon was written following the attack on the offices of Charlie Hedbo *and before the horrendous attack at the kosher supermarket in Paris. We must stand in solidarity with the Jewish community of Paris and all our brothers and sisters in danger throughout the world. We also must consider the implications of the earlier attack and the lessons we might learn*

The terrorist attack on the offices of the newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris this week was a horrendous, uncivilized, evil act. The fact that it was done in the name of a religious faith makes it even more of a *hillul hashem*, a desecration of God's name.

Since that attack, I have been thinking seriously about the issue of satirizing religious leaders or religions. I certainly am not in favor of censorship nor do I think religions or religious leaders are above reproach or should be given a free pass to escape the critical spotlight shown upon other institutions. But, it still bothers me deeply to see such caricatures of religious faiths—including Judaism—that the French newspaper *Charlie Hedbo* published.

To feel that one's religious faith has been demeaned or insulted is an experience that most of us who consider ourselves to be religious have experienced in one way or another during the course of our lives. It is a heartbreaking experience to have one's faith tradition or one's religious leaders or teachers mocked. Of course, it is horrendous and completely unjustifiable to respond to such mockery with murder or acts of violence but it is painful nonetheless.

The fact that bothers me most deeply about the caricatures in this magazine is that while religious leaders and thinkers who preach violence or hatred deserve to be publicly condemned and I have no hesitation joining in that condemnation, there are many religious leaders and thinkers who reject violence and hatred and are trying desperately to bring our world closer to redemption. They tend not to get as much attention and I despise and refute the idea that religion only brings pain to the world. I feel that caricatures or any type of "art" which paint with a broad brush hurt all of us.


Rabbi Robert Dobrusin

There are many religious leaders and thinkers who reject violence and hatred and are trying desperately to bring our world closer to redemption.

So, amidst the legitimate concern about censorship and free speech and the horrible example of hatred and violence demonstrated by the extremist Muslims who perpetrated these acts, let us take a moment to look at some positive religious examples around us. Let me refer to two local organizations and three individuals who epitomize a different, constructive approach to what religion can and should be.

I am currently serving on the board of the Interfaith Roundtable of Washtenaw County, an organization dedicated to sharing common concerns and seeking to educate each other about our different faiths. I am proud of the work the Roundtable does in seeking to bring faith communities together in peace and in mutual respect.

I have spoken on several occasions at programs sponsored by the Niagara Foundation, a group dedicated to bringing understanding between the Abrahamic faiths. Those programs have highlighted Jewish, Christian and Moslem leaders who have reached out in concern and love and clearly, publicly and forcefully condemned all acts of violence. Gathering in a room with people who truly seek mutual respect for religious faiths is refreshing indeed.

On an international level, while I clearly disagree with some of the positions of the Catholic Church, I continue to be so deeply impressed by the kindness, the sincerity, sensitivity and the humility of Pope Francis. He represents in so many ways what religion can be for the world and stands as a shining example for all of us.

And, when I think of our own faith, I think of leaders and teachers such as Abraham Joshua Heschel whose 42nd *yahrzeit* was observed in January. He was a man who personified what religious faith can be: teaching us to be humble, to never accept violence or hatred as "the way it should be" but to be truly surprised and dismayed at every act of violence. He stood for civil rights, for an end to war and even for environmental justice before it was popular to do so. He reached out to people of all faiths and begged us to make our lives "a work of art."

Lastly, in December, we learned of the death of one of the most honored teachers of our Conservative movement, Rabbi Harold Schulweis. Rabbi Schulweis built a vibrant and visionary synagogue in Los Angeles. He founded an organization to bring recognition to non-Jews who performed acts of courage and heroism to save Jews during the Shoah and joined with Leonard Fein, to form MAZON: a Jewish response to Hunger.

But, to me, Rabbi Schulweis will always be known first and foremost as the author of one my favorite books: *For Those Who Can't Believe*. This book is a gem, helping to show how Jewish faith can be fulfilling even for those who think critically and don't buy pat answers. It is a marvelous book and I can't recommend it strongly enough.

One of the points Rabbi Schulweis makes in this book is important as we consider our world today. He wrote that many people make erroneous assumptions about what religions teach and assume therefore they can't believe in the faith in which they were raised. Regarding a young man who is cynical about Judaism, Schulweis writes; "Paradoxically, the only religious notions he considers authentic are those he cannot believe; the only ones he can believe are those he thinks to be inauthentic." This is similar to that old line that is attributed to secular Israelis who would object to non-Orthodox synagogues because "the shul I don't go to

Continued on next page

This month at Beth Israel Congregation

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

World Wide Wrap

February 1, 9:30 a.m.

This event, sponsored by the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, encourages Conservative and Masorti congregations throughout the world to come together one morning a year to celebrate the mitzvah of putting on tefillin. There will be a short lesson on the putting on of tefillin followed by a Shacharit service and concluding with a bagels and lox brunch. Beth Israel is known for its Polar Bear photo of tefillin clad participants taken each year outside the building, regardless of the weather.

Extra sets of tefillin will be available for people who do not have their own to use, with volunteers to teach men and women how to lay tefillin. For additional information, contact Haran Rashes at 660-9283 or haran@umich.edu.

Gershowitz Shabbat—Shabbat Shekalim

Saturday, February 14, 2 p.m.

This annual service is held in memory of Henry Gershowitz, a past president of Beth Israel Congregation, who was well known for his devotion to the synagogue and for encouraging new people to become involved in leading a service. Though the services at Beth Israel are always participatory in that members of the congregation lead various parts of the service, this particular one is offered as an opportunity for new people to become involved in a way they have not been before. There are roles for people who can *daven* (lead the service) or *lein* (chant from the Torah) as well as roles for those without experience, or who would like to do something in English. Help is available for anyone who would like to learn a new role in the service. The Gershowitz Shabbat is sponsored by Men's Club, Women's League, and the Gershowitz family.

To sign up for a role in the Gershowitz Shabbat, go to the Beth Israel Website and select Event /Event Sign Up. For additional information, contact Haran Rashes at 660-9283 or haran@umich.edu.

Carlebach and chicken soup

Friday, February 20 6 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 7 p.m. Chicken Soup Friday Night Dinner

Participants enjoy lots of communal singing utilizing the lively and soulful melodies mostly composed by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. A fully transliterated prayer book is available for use. Following the service there is a Chicken Soup Shabbat Dinner. There is no charge for attending the service. The dinner fees are $15 per person 11 years old and up, and $10 per person per child 4–10. Dinner includes a chicken soup (vegetarian soup option) buffet: chicken soup, matzah balls, kreplach (dumplings with ground meat) rice, noodles, soup chicken, carrots soup nuts, coffee/tea and dessert. Reservations and payment are due before the event begins.

Tot Shabbat

Saturdays, February 14 and February 28, 11:15 a.m.

Tot Shabbat is a Saturday morning program/service for parents and their children 2–5 years old that includes songs, stories, and prayers. This program is run by Peretz Hirshbein on the second Saturday of the month, and by Jacob Kander on the fourth Saturday of the month. It includes songs, the mysterious "Shabbat Box," a Torah procession with stuffed Torah toys, and a kiddush for tots. There is no charge for this program.

Mini Minyan (Kindergarten–2nd grade)

Saturday, February 14, 11:15 a.m.

At Mini Minyan, kids celebrate Shabbat with the songs and stories they loved from Tot Shabbat while also learning prayers and discovering more about Shabbat and other holidays through discussions, games, and activities. Mini Minyan meets the second Saturday of the month throughout the school year. ■

Am I Charlie?, continued from previous page

is Orthodox." Offering alternatives which challenge assumptions and preconceived notions about faith often fail because it is easier to reject religion based on what you think religions teach than to engage in serious spiritual consideration of what a faith has to offer. Rabbi Schulweis and others who urge people to think seriously about the true meanings of their own faith are to be honored for helping us to look beyond assumptions see the beauty and wisdom in sincere, constructive religious belief.

While those who demonize religious faiths have unfortunately some very legitimate grounds to criticize and extremist terror is certainly the most blatant, painting with a broad brush is insulting. There are many who still do good work in the name of religions and I still believe in the power of religious faith to bring this world to a better place. I haven't given up yet despite what I read in the papers.

Many have begun to use the expression: "*Je suis Charlie*" to make a stand in favor of free expression of ideas. In terms of endorsing free speech, courageously standing against those who seek to silence others and standing in solidarity with those who have been victimized by terror, I also say: *Je suis Charlie*.

But, that doesn't mean I admire the way the newspaper has characterized Jews, Christians and Moslems. I don't. I find these cartoons to be deeply troubling and offensive to all.

In addition to standing for freedom of expression, those of us who believe religious faith can be a constructive aspect of our world and deserves respect must be also willing to say "I am a religious individual and I work for good in the world." In that way we will be following in the tradition of our teachers whom we remember today and honoring those throughout the world who continue to truly do God's work.

They are the ones who deserve to be on the front pages. ■

February at Temple Beth Emeth

Avital Ostfield, special to the WJN

Beginning Jewish Yoga

Thursdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26, noon–1:15 p.m. Temple Beth Emeth Social Hall.

Semester runs February 5–March 26, $90. For more information, contact aostfield@templebethemeth.org.

Nosh and Nowledge Series with Avital Ostfield

Monday, February 2, 7 p.m.; Thursday, February 5, noon

A course pack will be compiled for this particular Nosh and Nowledge meeting. It will consist of a variety of articles and reactions to the conflict in Israel this summer during Operation Protective Edge. The focus will be on social media and its use in this context. Congregants will receive the reading materials via email. Non TBE members are welcome and encouraged to join in the reading and discussion. For the reading materials, contact aostfield@templebethemeth.org.

Shalom Gever

Mondays and Wednesdays, February 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25; 4:30–8 p.m.

Temple Beth Emeth's Martial Arts for Health, Fitness and Self-defense. Open to grades K–12. grades K–2 meet from 4:30–5:15 p.m., grades 3–5 meet from 5:15–6 p.m. or 6:15–7 p.m., grades 6–9 meet from 7:15-8 p.m., and grades 10–12 meet from 7:15–8 p.m. Questions? Contact Rabbi Peter Gluck at info@shalomgever.com or SooJi Min at 665-4744.

Caring Community Shabbat

Friday, February 6, 7:30 p.m.

Join in for a special Shabbat with a sermon all about the future of Caring Community with a special oneg to follow.

Beyond Pentateuch: The Rest of the Hebrew Bible

Thursday, February 26, 7:30 p.m. Michael Weiss teaches Esther and Daniel

Join in for guided discussions of the Hebrew Bible less well-known. Participants will read from the ancient prophets, the historical narrative, from Joshua to the Babylonian exile, the poetry of Psalms, Job and more. In each seminar, texts chosen by a specialist in history, textual analysis, ancient Near Eastern civilization, or maybe even archeology, will be discussed. Enjoy informal exchanges; learn from scholars and each other; chat over refreshments after class.

Registration is not required, but it will allow participants to be emailed the texts ahead of time. To register, contact Leonore Gerstein, lbmgerst@gmail.com or 930-1673.

[E]met: An Honest Conversation about Death

Monday, Febraury 16, 7 p.m.

Remember the two topics never discussed at the dinner table—sex and death? Come join the ongoing monthly discussion group about death. The purpose is to increase the awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives. [E]met is a group directed discussion of death with no specific agenda other than to share stories, ideas and experiences. While a decidedly Jewish context will be offered, the discussion is not limited by any one belief.

[E]meth is not a grief support group or a counseling session, but rather an opportunity to grapple with this important part of life within a community of others, And of course, to share a nosh. This is co-facilitated by Brian Ashin and Rabbi Levy. For more information, contact aostfield@templebethemeth.org.

Men's Torah Study Reinvented

Monday, February 9 and 23, 7 p.m.

A men's Torah discussion group will be led by a lay leader on the 2nd Monday and by Rabbi Levy on the 4th Monday. Participants will find their way as men by wrestling with text. For more information, contact Bill Parkus at parkus@comcast.net.

Women's Torah Study

Monday, February 9 and 23, 7 p.m.

An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion will be led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org

Adult Hebrew Classes

Advanced Hebrew, Tuesdays, 5 p.m. February 3, 10, 17, 24
Intermediate Hebrew
Tuesdays, 6 p.m. February 3, 10, 17, 24,
Beginning Hebrew
Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. February 4, 11, 18, 25

Rabbi's Lunch and Learn

Fridays, 12:30–1:30 p.m. February 6, 13, 20, 27

Informal discussion led by Rabbi Levy. Participants are welcome to bring lunch.

Brotherhood Blood Drive

Saturday, February 14, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Come to TBE and contribute to the blood drive.

Sisterhood sponsors an event on Cyber Bullying

Wednesday, February 11, 7:30 p.m.

Come to TBE and learn about how to help with this issue effecting youth today.

Youth Programs

SkyZone, Saturday, February 7, 4:30 p.m.

Join the high school age students for an evening of fun and jumping at SkyZone in Canton. To RSVP, email AARTYouth@gmail.com.

AARTY presents JNN: Jewish Nerd Night, Sunday, February 8, 7:30 p.m.

Join in for the monthly Jewish Nerd nights directly following Religious School.

Families with Young Children (FYC): Shabbat Service times every Friday

Friday, February 6, 13, 20, 27

Tot (0–5 year olds) Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Levy, and Cantor Hayut, 6 p.m.; Dinner for Tot Shabbat, 6:30 p.m.; Popsicle Oneg, 7 p.m.

All of your favorite songs and "tot team," Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Levy, will lead Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Join in for macaroni and cheese, fish sticks, applesauce, and salad bar at 6:30 p.m. Dinner is just $5 per person and this year families can buy a $20 punch card ahead of time for a discounted price. Punch cards are available in the TBE office. ■

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Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies

February 2014 Events

February 3, 9 am - 5:30 pm
Frankel Institute Symposium
Gender and Sexuality in Law and Religion
Rackham Assembly Hall
915 East Washington Street

February 13, 1:15 - 3:00 pm
Frankel Institute Round Table
Christine Achinger, Benjamin Baader, and Verena Kasper-Marienberg, Frankel Fellows
German Jews & Gender
202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022

February 27, 12:15 pm
Beth Wenger, Frankel Fellow
Masculinizing American Jewish Philanthropy
202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022

February 10, Noon
Karen Underhill, University of Illinois
Bruno Schultz's Sanatorium: Reflections on the Uneasy Afterlife of National Literatures
1080 South University Street, Room 1636

February 18, 4 pm
Bernard Wasserstein, University of Chicago
The Ambiguity of Virtue: Gertrude van Tijn and the Fate of the Dutch Jews during the Holocaust
202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022

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New year, new blessings, new app

By Rabbi Julie Schonfeld/JNS.orgyy

There has been much conversation recently about how we, as rabbis, can best reach out to all Jews—not just those who show up at synagogue for Shabbat or holiday services. We have seen studies show that an increasing number of Jews self-identify as "spiritual" rather than "religious," and seek out our institutions sporadically, if at all.

As Jewish leaders, and as rabbis, we must find more ways to help Jews discover our traditions and to help them engage from where they are. We need to find ways to re-engage those who are not finding what they need in our religious institutions, even as we provide more for those we still see frequently. We must help each Jew connect to their Judaism within the context of their own lives, and to use the experiences and feelings that are most compelling to them as springboards to encounter the many ways that Judaism can guide us to grow through these experiences. Rather than teach Judaism and show its relevance, we can ask, "What is most relevant to you," and explore those topics through the lens of Judaism.

Many Jews are familiar with the *bracha* (blessing) recited before eating bread, but how many know that we have a more specific blessing to recite before biting into our favorite cookie? Or that there is a blessing for seeing a rainbow or a beautiful flowering tree in the spring?

Conservative Judaism is rooted in the interplay of tradition and modernity. This is a challenge we still seek to meet today as we work to find ways to help Jews discover our traditions, and to help them do it in a way that is comfortable for them. These days, the easiest way to reach people is often through technology—through the phones and tablets that often accompany us wherever we go.

In embracing this new culture of technological connectivity, and in an effort to join the old and the new, the Rabbinical Assembly (the international association of Conservative/Masorti rabbis) has created a new app called "Sanctifull" for the iPhone, iPad, and iPod. The app is by no means the full answer to the aforementioned larger questions, but it is a step in the right direction to engaging Jews where they are.

CREDIT: APPLE APP STORE

A screen on the Rabbinical Assembly's new "Sanctifull" smartphone app

In creating this app, we sought out prayer-appropriate moments calling for which traditional texts do not exist—or where we found the need for prayers in addition to the existing ones—and have put together a resource that includes translations, transliterations, explanations (or *kavanot*), and recordings of major blessings. This new platform also includes meditations that draw on traditional texts and speak to critical moments when individuals seek a connection to Judaism, but have no traditional *bracha* to recite.

While our ancient tradition does not directly address every experience, today's rabbis—as have our teachers throughout the millennia—draw upon our tradition and modernity, creating prayers and blessing that we can use in our lives today. Our Jewish tradition has sources to help us find gratitude or strength for almost every aspect of life, every challenge we encounter, and every step we take.

The free app includes, for instance, a new prayer for parents whose child is beginning school for the first time, and for when that child goes off to college or moves into his first apartment. There is also a prayer to give one strength when it is necessary to move one's mother into a nursing home, and a prayer to recite after a fight with a spouse or close friend.

When our life experiences leave us speechless, these blessings will help provide the words and meditations to help us heal, reconcile, and grow. The app's traditional blessings bring contemporary aspects to them, while the new contemporary blessings are rich in Jewish tradition.

The entry for the traditional prayer on wine, for example, includes a *kavanah* that reminds us, "Before I drink I pause to recall that wine can be a blessing or a curse. I commit not to drink and drive, not to allow this wine to make me act foolishly. As Rabbi Yohanan taught, for the wise, wine is always a blessing."

Meanwhile, the new contemporary prayer for becoming a vegetarian draws on the age-old Jewish values of *sh'mirat haguf* (maintaining a healthy body) and *tsar ba'alei hayim* (compassion for the suffering of animals).

Prayer cannot be outsourced to others. We believe that each individual has their own personal relationship with God and that each individual has their own way of spiritual communication. We in the Conservative movement have taken on the task of making Judaism's wisdom accessible for Jews in the rhythm of their everyday experiences. These new prayers have been created to accompany a variety of life's moments that call out for a sacred connection, so that we can awaken all Jews' awareness to the richness of Jewish tradition.

By making these traditional and new *brachot* available on the Sanctifull app, we are working to bring Judaism to Jews—wherever they may be. ■

Rabbi Julie Schonfeld is the executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international member organization for Conservative and Masorti rabbis.

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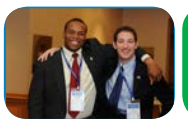
POWER  PEOPLE IMPACT

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Little left of Cuban Jewry's rich past

By Rafael Medoff/JNS.org

The new U.S. policy of rapprochement with Cuba, which was accompanied by the celebrated release of imprisoned Jewish aid worker Alan Gross, probably will give American Jews greater access to a Jewish community with which few are familiar. But visitors will find that the years have not been kind to once-thriving Cuban Jewry.

During the centuries of Spanish rule in Cuba, no more than a scattered handful of Jews lived there. Catholicism was the only religion the Spanish colonial authorities permitted. The modern Jewish connection to Cuba began in the 1890s, when a number of American Jews lent their support to the Cuban liberation movement, headed by Jose Marti.

After the Spanish-American war of 1898 resulted in Cuban independence, American Jewish businessmen began settling on the island. By 1904, the Cuban Jewish community, numbering more than 300 families, established its first synagogue, the United Hebrew Congregation, which was part of the Reform movement. During the years leading up to World War One, more than 5,000 Sephardic Jews from Turkey and North Africa settled in Cuba. Thanks to their fluency in Ladino, they were able to adjust quickly to life in a Spanish-speaking country. The island's first Orthodox synagogue was founded in 1914.

There are three synagogues in Cuba. This shul, the newest one on the Island nation, is in Santa Clara.

As the U.S. tightened its immigration restrictions in the 1920s, more European Jews went instead to Cuba, although in many cases they saw it merely as a way station until they could enter America. The Cuban Jewish population grew to more than 20,000, and Havana, although still the center of the community, was now supplemented by clusters of Jews in smaller cities on the island.

Cuban Jews first began to experience serious anti-Semitism in the 1930s, as the impact of the worldwide depression stimulated extreme nationalism and ethnic scapegoating. Nazi agents seeking to spread Hitler's influence in Latin America helped stir up anti-Jewish resentment in Cuba, and the country's oldest newspaper, Didrio de la Marina, began reprinting articles from Julius Streicher's Nazi publication Der Sturmer. Rumors on Yom Kippur eve in 1933 that Jews planned to aid anti-government strikers resulted in the police forcing dozens of Jewish businessmen to open their stores on the holy day.

Military strongman Fulgenico Batista, who took power in 1933, for the first time allowed Jews to apply for full citizenship. But he also pushed through a law requiring that at least 50 percent of all employees of businesses be Cuban-born. Although not aimed at Jews, it had the effect of ousting many Jews from their jobs. Nevertheless, the Cuban Jewish community felt reasonably secure and continued to gradually expand, reaching a peak of more than 20,000 in the 1930s.

American Jewish vacationers were regular patrons of the fabled Havana nightlife. In his autobiography, Hollywood screenwriter Ben Hecht described how he and a colleague would sometimes, on a whim, bring dozens of friends to Havana for a week of drunken revelry. "Cafes were raided and native female entertainers were carried off," he recalled cheerfully. "Americans were still loved and grinned at by foreign eyes, [so] there was a minimum of broken heads."

In the wake of the German annexation of Austria and the growing number of German and Austrian Jews seeking havens, about 3,000 Jewish refugees were permitted to enter Cuba in 1938-1939. One U.S. newspaper columnist speculated that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had secretly agreed to lower tariffs on Cuban sugar imports in return for Cuba opening its doors to refugees. That theory was soon discredited, however, when the Cuban authorities refused to permit the landing of the 930 passengers on the St. Louis refugee ship in May 1939. In 1942, Cuba imposed a ban on all immigrants from Axis countries.

Many Cuban leaders sympathized with the Zionist cause, and the Cuban Senate in 1947 unanimously reaffirmed its previous endorsement of the Balfour Declaration (in which a British dignitary recognized the need for a Jewish homeland in Israel). The Cuban ambassador's vote against the United Nations plan to partition the Palestine mandate thus surprised many. The reasons for that about-face remain a source of controversy among historians. In any event, the installation of a new Cuban government in 1949 resulted in Cuban recognition of the state of Israel.

The 1950s were a time of relative prosperity for Cuban Jewry, crowned by the construction of an expensive and elaborate cultural center in the Havana suburb of Vedado. Cuban Jews also established their own social clubs, medical clinics, and a monthly magazine, Israelia.

The Communist revolution that brought Fidel Castro to power in 1959 changed everything for Cuba's Jews. Although some individual Jews were part of Castro's government, his policy of nationalizing private businesses decimated the Jewish community. Within the first two years

Continued on page 17

The improbable romance between Israel and Azerbaijan

By Alina Dain Sharon/JNS.org

Since its founding in 1948, Israel has found Muslim-majority allies hard to come by. Yet an improbable romance continues to develop between the Jewish state and Azerbaijan.

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon took a surprise trip to Azerbaijan in September, marking the first-ever visit by the holder of his position to a Muslim-majority nation in the Southern Caucasus region. Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and former president Shimon Peres have also visited Azerbaijan, and Azeri dignitaries have made the trip to Israel. Though it is most often attributed to a shared interest in combating the threat posed by Iran, experts say the blooming Israeli-Azeri friendship goes much deeper.

"Having a close link with a Shiite-majority nation helps shatter the notion of an Islamic rejectionist front against Israel," said American Jewish Committee (AJC) Executive Director David Harris, who in 2012 received the "Dostlug" Order of Friendship, Azerbaijan's highest honor for a foreign citizen, from Azeri President Ilham Aliyev. "For Azerbaijan, located in a tough neighborhood, Israel is a very valued source of economic and strategic assistance."

While warm Israeli-Azeri ties have received increased media attention of late, the phenomenon is not a new one. Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, recalled a sympathetic environment for Jews and Israel when the 52-member umbrella group visited Azerbaijan in 2006.

"We were taken aback by the welcome we received, by the freedom enjoyed by the Jewish community, the fact that Israeli flags fly in the synagogues, that when we met with Jewish students on campus and asked them about anti-Semitism, they said they never experienced it, nor anti-Israel expressions, except from very limited groups," Hoenlein said.

Dr. Avinoam Idan—the senior fellow with the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore as well as a University of Haifa professor—told JNS.org that Azerbaijan often comes under attack from violent Islamist groups, including some sponsored by Iran, which borders Azerbaijan in the south. The chief foreign policy concern of Israel in recent years, meanwhile, has been the advancement of the Iranian nuclear program.

"Azerbaijan also views strong ties with Israel and the Jewish world as an important part of achieving strong ties with the United States, which have waned in recent years," said Idan, who served for seven years in the Israeli embassy in Moscow during the fall of the Soviet Union, when he was intimately involved in establishing diplomacy between Israel and the Caucasus nations.

"Azerbaijan is geopolitically a very strategic country," said Hoenlein. "There are tens of millions of Azeris living in Iran. The [Jewish community and Israeli] relationship with central Asian countries, generally, I think is very important. They are under pressure from Russia, from Islamic fundamentalists, from Iran, from Wahhabism, and we have to do a [good] job to help bolster them."

Yet Azeri officials prefer to downplay the role of the Iranian threat in their nation's relationship with Israel. Mammad Talibov, counselor of political and legal affairs at the embassy of Azerbaijan in Washington, D.C., told JNS.org that "we always point out that our bilateral relations are neither linked with, nor aimed against, any third parties."

CREDIT: ARIEL HERMONI/MINISTRY OF DEFENSE/FLASH90.

Israeli Minister of Defense Moshe Ya'alon (pictured at left, in center, holding rug) meets with representatives from the Jewish community in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, on September 10, 2014

"Simply put, our relationship with Israel is not about Iran," he said. "It is about Azerbaijan and Israel. We have robust economic relations, especially in the area of technology, [and] defense ties, and [we] work together to promote peace and tolerance. We are also proud that the Azeri Jewish community serves as a bridge between the two nations."

Asim Mollazade, a member of the Azeri parliament and chairman of the country's Democratic Reforms political party, expressed the same sentiment. He told JNS.org that Iran "is not so important [of a] factor in making Azerbaijan and Israel friends and partners," and that the "basis of our relations is [the] historic links between Jews and [the] Azeri people."

Mollazade, however, did acknowledge that both Azerbaijan and Israel face threats in their respective turbulent regions, chief among them "international terror," which means "cooperation on security issues is important for our partnership."

Rafael Harpaz, Israel's ambassador to Azerbaijan, told JNS.org that there are currently about 30,000 Jews in Azerbaijan, though the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee estimate is about half that number. The Azeri Jewish community includes the "Mountain Jews" (who have lived there since the 5th century AD), Ashkenazi Jews, and a small number of Georgian Jews.

"I have never been in a place like this in my life. You see what happens in Western Europe, but here you can [openly] waive an Israeli flag outside," Harpaz said in an interview translated from Hebrew.

Last year, when a new Torah scroll was dedicated at a synagogue in the Azeri capital of Baku, the ceremony was attended by Muslim, Russian Orthodox Christian, Albanian-Udi Christian, and Catholic leaders.

"Where else in the world can you see such a thing?" Harpaz asked rhetorically.

Idan said that while anti-Semitism was prevalent in the more Slavic parts of the Soviet Union, Jewish life in the southern Caucasus countries—mainly Azerbaijan and Georgia, where there were large Jewish communities—"was even during Soviet times a completely different reality." People like Aliyev, the current president, grew up having very positive relations with Jews.

"Aliyev often cites his Jewish teachers as having a very formative influence on him," Idan said.

"We are proud of [our] centuries-old traditions on inclusiveness," said Talibov. "Azerbaijan and Israel are friendly countries, and Jewish citizens of Azerbaijan are proud citizens of our nation. We see this as very normal."

In Israel, meanwhile, there is a large community of Jewish immigrants from Azerbaijan, who made aliyah from the 1970s through the early 1990s, at the time of the Soviet Union's collapse.

Idan noted that at the government level, Azerbaijan was one of the only Muslim-majority nations that did not publicly criticize Israel during the recent Gaza war, despite pressure to do so from other Muslim countries and from some Azeris who called for an embargo on oil sales to the Jewish state. Azerbaijan supplies 40 percent of Israel's oil through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline.

"Israel doesn't have experience in the field of energy [in areas like drilling, exporting, and financing]. We just recently discovered natural gas, [and] we don't have many energy engineers," said Harpaz, meaning Israel learns about those disciplines from Azerbaijan.

Israel, in turn, has greater experience than Azerbaijan in fields such as trade, telecommunications, cyber-technology, agriculture, medicine, and tourism.

"We are willing to share [expertise] with our friends the Azeris," Harpaz said. "There is a lot of activity by Israeli companies [in Azerbaijan]."

In early December, during the BakuTel-2014 20th Azerbaijan International Telecommunications and Information Technologies Exhibition, President Aliyev himself visited the national pavilion of Israel. Fourteen Israeli companies participated in the exhibition.

Israeli cultural delegations, from groups like the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, have also visited Azerbaijan, Currently, the Azeri national airline Azal flies twice a week between Baku and Tel Aviv. Azal did not stop flights to Israel during this summer's Gaza war, even when other airlines—including American carriers—temporarily did so.

Aliyev's positive attitude about Israel was also evident back in 2009, when then Turkish Prime Minister (and now president) Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly chastised Israel's president, Peres, during a panel at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland.

"When it comes to killing, you (Israel) know well how to kill people," Erdogan said at the time. What was not publicized, according to Idan, is the fact that immediately after the encounter between Peres and Erdogan, there was a private meeting scheduled between Peres and Aliyev. But after Erdogan's comments, Aliyev "decided to open his meeting [with Peres] to the media and he made an effort to clearly show his support for Peres and Israel," said Idan.

Yet Aliyev is not a controversy-free figure. Allegations of financial and electoral corruption have long been associated with his government. Most recently, the Azeri government ordered the arrest of journalist Khadija Ismayilova, who is known for reporting on corruption in Azerbaijan. Many viewed her arrest to be politically motivated.

"Broadly speaking, we are deeply troubled by restrictions on civil society activities, including on journalists in Azerbaijan, and are increasingly concerned that the government there is not living up to its international commitments and obligations," said U.S. State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf.

Jewish leaders Hoenlein and Harris both took issue with sentiments that internal developments in Azerbaijan should affect Israel's relationship with the country.

"Countries that have demonstrated friendship to their Jewish communities—even though their records on human rights issues and other things are not perfect, and we know that—we have to try to encourage them to change, but at the same time to recognize the progress that has been made and the importance of the relationship with them," Hoenlein said.

"Full democracy and transparency can take decades to develop," said Harris. "And if these were the sole litmus tests for foreign relations, then both the U.S. and Israel would have far fewer partners."

Despite its warm relationship with Israel, Azerbaijan does not yet have an embassy in the Jewish state. Talibov called this a "technical issue," saying his country is "working with the Israeli side on the matter."

Idan said that the lack of an Azeri embassy in Israel may stem from Azerbaijan's fear of backlash from Iran and other Muslim-majority nations. Yet the case of Azerbaijan proves that "having an embassy is not a condition for the advancement of relations between nations," he said.

"[Azerbaijan] is a fairly rare example of a Muslim country on the one hand, and on the other hand a country that has such a close relationship with a country like Israel," said Idan. ■

Prisoners of memory: an unsung story of WWII volunteers from pre-state Israel

By Zvi Harel/Israel Hayom/JNS.org

Ben-Zion Solomin, age 101, wears the cap of a British soldier and is assisted by his son and caregiver as he slowly approaches the front of the stage to light a Hanukkah candle and welcome the crowd at the Armored Corps Memorial at Latrun, near Jerusalem.

The ceremony was held to honor the families of the prisoners of war from the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps (AMPC), who were captured by the Nazis during World War II and later freed by the Allied forces. In a cracked voice, with his son helping him, Solomin read his prepared remarks.

"In honor of the endurance, the survival, the Zionist flame, and the devotion to the security services," he said of the candle he would light.

The marks Solomin proudly bears on his chest tell an impressive story of combat and survival, one that has almost been erased from collective memory: the story of the 3,200 volunteers from pre-state Israel who joined the pioneer corps in mid-1940, leaving their families behind to serve in His Majesty's Armed Forces. Close to 400 of them were Arabs, and together they made up one-tenth of all the men and women from pre-state Israel who volunteered with the British army during the war.

Most AMPC members saw their first action in the western desert on the Egyptian-Libyan border. Their objective was to fend off the Italian army. The British then redeployed them to meet the German threat, which was how some of them reached the Balkans and Greece.

The seminal event that changed the lives of many of these volunteers took place on the morning of April 29, 1941. On the beach at Kalamata in the south of the Peloponnese peninsula in southern Greece, more than 1,500 AMPC members and 12,000 British soldiers were captured by the Germans. The British gave the order to surrender only after it became clear that there would be no possibility of a rescue. On the night before they surrendered, AMPC members engaged in battles with the German troops and suffered losses. Solomin was among the wounded.

The POWs were held in German captivity for four years. Many were transferred to work camps, 200 were killed during the war, some suffered from various forms of torture, and those who survived were left emotionally scarred.

Seventy years after their release from captivity, their families set up a forum to tell the story that had been silenced for decades. Heading the efforts is Talia Klayner-Dayagi, the granddaughter of a former AMPC soldier, who says that she has so far located 250 families with stories similar to her own. There are currently only eight families of rescued AMPC servicemen living in Israel, she said.

The most important research on the captives' story was completed by Professor Yoav Gelber, a historian at the University of Haifa. Gelber based his study on numerous documents collected in Israel and abroad, and on interviews with former members of the British army. In 1982, he wrote an article about the subject for the Yad Vashem Holocaust research center titled "Palestinian POWs in German Captivity."

According to Gelber's research, at least 150 POWs are believed to have escaped from captivity. One man who evaded capture several hours before the British surrender was 90-year-old David Yechiel. Athletic and broad-shouldered, he was quick to say of himself that he had excelled from childhood in swimming and boxing, which helped him during his time as a volunteer.

Recalling the circumstances the led him to volunteer to the AMPC in 1940, he said, "I was 16 years old, and tables were set up in the streets of Tel Aviv, and they urged us to volunteer for the British army. I had to lie about my age, and so I did. I went to the British base in Sarafand (today Tzrifin) and said that I was 17 and a half. They believed me. All my friends volunteered, and so did I. My parents supported me, but they did not know that I was going to war. The Jewish community leaders wanted us to volunteer so that we would get a military education."

CREDIT: WAR OFFICE OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER.

Four members of the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps (AMPC) at No. 2 Training Centre at Caister, Norfolk, United Kingdom, in 1939

Yechiel recalled that while in the desert, AMPC members were soldiers in every sense, so they were trained as infantry troops.

"I was lucky," he said. "During the entire war, in the desert and later in Greece, I came face to face with death more than 10 times. My friend, who stuck close to me, was killed on the spot by a German aerial strike. When I got to the Kalamata port, there was concern I might be taken prisoner by the Germans. I told myself that I would never let that happen. I figured that the Germans killed Jews, and certainly Jewish soldiers. I told myself that I had nothing to lose, either I would die trying to escape or the Germans would kill me once I was taken prisoner.

"The only option was to swim at night toward two Australian ships. I was determined. I went into the water, and I swam for about an hour and a half, carrying my weapon, until I came close to one of the ships. A small boat brought me to the ship, and so I was saved. Later on, they brought me back to Egypt and from there to the Sarafand camp, where I was trained and transferred to the British Infantry."

Among the captives was legendary workers' leader Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, who later served as the secretary-general of the Histadrut labor federation, an member of Knesset, and Israel's transportation minister. Ben-Aharon was 35 when he was taken as a prisoner, and the trauma cut short his career as a workers' leader.

Another commander who was captured was Yosef Almogi, who later served as mayor of Haifa and held several ministerial posts. Almogi was 31 at the time and a sergeant in the British army. He wrote about his captivity in his book, *With Head Held High.*

The former prisoners and their families spoke at length about Almogi's efforts to unite the prisoners, when he called on officers of all ranks to stay with their men and not abandon them. In his book, Almogi wrote that his request stemmed from a double fear—"that the conditions at the work camp would be worse than in a stalag [a German term for a POW camp], and that there they would try to deprive our men of their rights and even kill them."

Gelber's research found the Germans had decided they would not set up special camps for the Jewish POWs as early as 1940, when they waged war on France. They preferred that the French, like the British, separate themselves from the Jews and demand to be taken to work outside the camp. But they were quickly proven wrong. Representatives of the British prisoners in the Lamsdorf POW camp in Silesia—where 1,160 POWs from pre-state Israel arrived about six months later, joining 19,000 British POWs—made it clear that they would not do such a thing, "and through the diplomatic pipelines it was hinted to them that the British government would also insist that the Jewish prisoners be afforded equal treatment," according to Gelber.

Gelber said that after the Germans announced that Red Cross relief packages would not be distributed to the POWs from Mandatory Palestine, the representative of the British POWs said that the British would not accept the packages either.

According to Gelber, after several months the Germans accepted the principle of equal treatment for the British POWs. Yet "outbursts against Jews, while not uncommon in German POW camps, were usually the result of personal or camp initiative and not of orders from above," Gelber wrote in "Palestinian POWs in German Captivity."

Starvation, humiliation, abuse, and forced labor at gunpoint were routine for the POWs. Several POWs were even shot to death by the Germans. Early in their captivity, several hungry prisoners who fell upon foodstuffs were shot dead. POWs who worked in coal mines were murdered later on. The Germans treated the POWs with cruelty even in early 1945, when Germany's surrender was only a matter of time.

"Most of them were held by the Germans until the surrender," Gelber wrote. "Some could not endure the final days of captivity and fell on the brink of liberation."

Binyamin Beit-Halachmi, who was severely traumatized by his long stint in German captivity, died at age 80. He volunteered for the AMPC at 18 and married his wife, Rivka, in 1947.

"We didn't know what post-traumatic stress disorder was then," Rivka recalled, "but it was obvious that this was what had happened to him. I knew a pleasant, generous, and tranquil man who, after age 30, became irritable and impatient."

Brothers Shmuel and Shlomo Laufer of Tel Aviv went to war together with the AMPC and were liberated in May 1945. Shmuel's daughter Sara Kochavi, a member of Kibbutz Yagur and a journalist, recently wrote about the survival of her father and her uncle in the kibbutz's weekly journal.

"[My father and his brother] had to leave a wife and small child behind," she wrote. "My father's motive for volunteering in the British army was a double one: the closing of the port and the motivation to fight the Nazis. What contributed particularly to the brothers' survival was that each one encouraged the other. Even in captivity, my father never lost his sense of humor. Like many of the POWs, he leaned English in captivity, and before he returned to Palestine he was sent to England to recover, as all the captives were. When they returned to Palestine, the Jewish community ignored them because in the eyes of its leaders, being a POW was no great honor."

Many of the POWs were saved in 1941 on a Nazi-planned death march from Silesia to Germany.

"There were terrible conditions of snow and freezing cold," said Yossi Solomin, POW Ben-Zion Solomin's son. "Because of the Germans' fear, they ordered the captives to march at night as well. Not everyone had food to eat—not even the German soldiers did. Everyone ate frozen beet sugar. They marched for several months, almost to Munich, an unimaginable distance of 900 kilometers. There was a snowstorm and they thought that they were going to die, and they shouted '*Shema Yisrael*' (Hear, O Israel). And suddenly, a miracle occurred and trucks from the Swiss Red Cross saved them." ■

What snow?

Photo by Carrie Bank

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Turkey, terror, and tirades: what the Paris attacks reveal about Erdogan's regime

By Alina Dain Sharon/JNS.org

On January 19, the European Union (EU) announced it is partnering on counter-terrorism projects with Middle East countries—including Turkey, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, and the Gulf states—in the wake of the Islamist terror attacks in Paris at the Charlie Hebdo magazine and a kosher supermarket. But is Turkey a suitable partner for that initiative?

Turkey's inclusion in the EU's counter-terrorism plan comes despite longstanding reports of jihadists using the Turkish border to cross into countries where they join Muslim terrorists. In particular, a Turkish official recently admitted that Hayat Boumeddiene—the girlfriend of Amedy Coulibaly, the terrorist who took nearly 20 hostages at the Paris kosher supermarket—had crossed into Syria through Turkey. Boumeddiene was being pursued by authorities as a suspected accomplice in the attack.

Turkey's inclusion in the EU's counter-terrorism plan comes despite longstanding reports of jihadists using the Turkish border to cross into countries where they join Muslim terrorists.

Since Boumeddiene was not listed on any no-fly list, there is no way that Turkey could have known to watch her, according to Michael Koplow, program director of the Israel Institute think tank. But at the same time, Koplow said, "There's no question that Turkey has turned a blind eye in a lot of ways to the rise of ISIS (Islamic State) in Syria… and jihadists who [are] crossing into Syria over their border."

"In the past few months it seems that Turkey has tried to crack down on [these] jihadi highways to Syria a bit, but it's difficult," Koplow told JNS.org. "Turkey has an extremely long border with Syria. It's nearly impossible to police all things, so people are going to get through."

Turkey, added Koplow, "doesn't seem to recognize the extent of the [border] problem, or at least doesn't want to acknowledge it."

Western nations, and Israel in particular, should be concerned that Turkey is "clearly supporting radical extremist groups in the Middle East, be it in Syria, in Libya, among the Palestinians, [or] of course, helping Hamas," said Efraim Inbar, a professor of political studies at Israel's Bar-Ilan University and director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA).

Turkey is hosting the new Istanbul headquarters of Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist group that governs Gaza. Additionally, the Paris terror attacks have elicited a series of inflammatory comments about the Jewish state by Turkish officials.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu last week accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of committing "crimes against humanity" equivalent to the Paris attacks, citing Israel's Operation Protective Edge against Hamas last summer and the 2010 Gaza flotilla incident (in which Israeli forces were attacked by Turkish militants aboard the Mavi Marmara vessel and subsequently killed nine of those militants).

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan slammed Netanyahu for attending the January 11 mass anti-terrorism rally in Paris, accusing the Israeli prime minister of carrying out "state terrorism." Additionally, a member of Erdoğan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), Ibrahim Melih Gökçek, promoted an anti-Israel conspiracy theory when he told a gathering of youths that because Israel is angry with France for supporting a recent Palestinian statehood resolution at the United Nations, it is "certain" that Israel's Mossad spy agency is behind the Paris attacks.

Israel is "bewildered that the U.S. and the Europeans allow a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member [such as Turkey] to behave in such a way, but we see the inability of the Americans and Europeans to call a spade a spade," Inbar told JNS.org.

The Israeli-Turkish relationship has been deteriorating since Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza from 2008-09. Erdogan publicly chastised Israeli president Shimon Peres in 2009 during a panel at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland, saying, "When it comes to killing, you (Israel) know well how to kill people."

The Gaza flotilla incident further strained Israel-Turkey ties, but Koplow cautions against the notion that their relations were bright before 2008. "Israel and Turkey had a strong relationship in the 1990s," but it was mainly a military relationship.

When the AKP party first came to power in Turkey in 2002, it sought to address Western skepticism about its rise and presented "a very moderate front" during its first term, meaning it did not "ruffle any feathers" internationally nor antagonize Israel.

But when AKP was re-elected in 2007, its foreign policy became more outward facing and Turkey became more involved in Middle East issues, in part by brokering talks between Israel and Syria or the Palestinians. Erdogan began to support the Palestinian cause, largely due to the desire to expand Turkey's global footprint.

"There's this idea floating around that Israel and Turkey were steadfast allies up until the AKP. I'm not sure that's an accurate picture," Koplow told JNS.org. Nevertheless, Turkey and Israel "were never at each other's throats until the late 2000s and the AKP," he said.

Koplow explained that opposing Israel has political benefits for the AKP.

"Turkey is in the middle of what has essentially been a two-year election cycle," he said. "There were local elections last spring, there was a presidential election last summer, and there are parliamentary elections coming up this summer as well. In the context of that, it plays very well for the AKP base to bash the Israelis and to play up the AKP's 'nationalism' by going after Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu."

But Dr. Harold Rhode, a distinguished senior fellow at the Gatestone Institute think tank and the former Turkish Desk Officer at the U.S. Department of Defense, views the current Turkish leadership's stances within the prism of religion rather than politics.

"Erdogan is an Islamic fundamentalist who is anti-Western and anti-American," Rhode told JNS.org, noting that both Erdogan and Prime Minister Davotoglu "grew up in what are called Imam-Hatip schools, which are religious schools in Turkey that preach a form of Islam" that is "doctrinaire." That doctrine, explained Rhode, teaches that "Islam is the only way."

The modern Turkish republic was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who tried create a secular geographic entity. Before Atatürk formed what is today known as Turkey, the Ottoman Empire promoted Sunni Islam there—and while Atatürk had some success in secularizing Turkey, Rhode described a mistaken tendency in the West to "think that once Atatürk snapped his hands, that all Turks began to think in a different way."

Islamic fundamentalists first came to power in Turkey in the 1990s under prime minister Necmettin Erbakan, who Rhode called "the intellectual godfather of President Erdogan, former president Adbullah Gul, and the present Prime Minister Davotoglu."

"Erbakan tried to re-Islamify the society quickly… but the military overthrew him by what the Turks call an 'e-coup' (electronic coup)," said Rhode.

Erbakan's failure taught Erdogan not to confront secular authorities and risk immediate defeat; therefore, Erdogan's method was "slowly but surely to push, and push, and push" Islamization, Rhode said.

In Rhode's estimation, Erdogan was always "a vicious anti-Semite" and very intolerant of religious diversity in general.

"I speak Turkish and I have a personal experience standing with him [waiting to be introduced to Erdogan by a friend], when he thought I was just one more dumb American bureaucrat, and he had no idea I was understanding exactly what was going on in the conversation. … One of his advisors and he are having a discussion… and all of a sudden he blurted out, 'Alevi (another branch of Islam) Köpek.' Köpek means a dog, which is a horrible thing to call someone in Turkey," Rhode recalled.

America chose "to put its head in the sand" about Erdogan's true views—as did many past Israeli leaders—while Erdogan "pulled a fast one on the outside world" and on many Turks "who desperately wanted to see him as an Islamic reformer," said Rhode.

CREDIT: ABED RAHIM KHATIB/FLASH 90.

In Gaza City in 2011, Palestinian students hold up pictures of then Turkish prime minister and now President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during a rally that urged Erdogan to visit the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip

Yet despite their diplomatic dysfunction, trade between Israel and Turkey is at an all-time high. Last July, a report in Haaretz cited Israeli Ministry of Economy figures showing that Israeli exports to Turkey in the first four months of 2014 had climbed nearly 25 percent (to $949.2 million) from the same period in 2013. Israel's imports from Turkey grew to $956 million over that span, a 21-percent from the first four months of 2013.

Neither Israel nor Turkey has an interest "to stamp out trade between the two countries because it benefits both economies," especially because Turkey is not energy independent, the Israel Institute's Koplow told JNS.org.

"Below the government level… there's been a lot of effort to try to figure out a way for Israel to export natural gas to Turkey," he said.

On the political level, BESA's Inbar believes there is "a struggle over the soul of Turkey within Turkey."

"This is an issue of identity, [of] where Turkey is going," he said. "I am not optimistic, but there is a possibility that maybe the more Western elements of Turkish society will gain the upper hand, and then of course we will see entirely different relations between Turkey and Israel, and Turkey and the West."

Rhode is even less optimistic, offering an analogy on the increasingly contradictory behavior of the Turkish government.

"I'll give you what a Turkish satirist—Aksakalli—said in the 1940s," he said. "'Turkey is like a ship, a big ship, where the captain and crew are leading the ship to head westward while the boat is traveling full speed ahead eastward.' That summarizes Turkey very well." ■

Cuban Jewry, continued from page 12

of the Castro regime, nearly 7,000 Cuban Jews, including most Jewish leaders, fled the country. Altogether, about 90 percent of Cuba's Jews left. Most went to America, and a small number immigrated to Israel or South America.

Castro adopted a harsh anti-Israel line, and hosted Third World conferences where extreme denunciations of Israel were the norm. Castro also established close relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, which reportedly helped Cuba supply weapons to Communist

PHOTO BY LAWRENCE JACKSON

Alan Gross arrived at the Joint Base Andrews military facility in Maryland on December 17, 2014

revolutionary groups in Latin America. A Cuban diplomat who defected to the West reported that throughout the 1970s, Cuba's embassy in Damascus in turn shipped arms to Palestinian terrorist groups in Lebanon. Whether the new U.S.-Cuba rapprochement will result in friendlier Cuban relations with Israel remains to be seen.

Visitors to Cuba today will find only about 1,500 Jews. There are just a handful of functioning synagogues and a single kosher butcher. The community's last rabbi passed away in 1975. A New York Times correspondent who visited Cuba in 2007 reported that it was so difficult to find the required quorum of 10 adult males for morning prayers that the Jewish community initiated a custom of counting its Torah scrolls as members of the minyan. Forthcoming visitors are not likely to find that the situation has changed very much since then. ■

Dr. Rafael Medoff is founding director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, and author of 15 books on the Holocaust, Zionism, and Jewish history.

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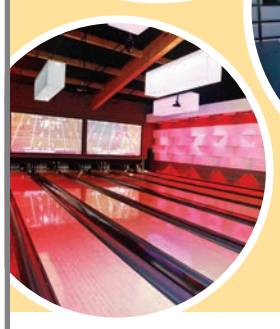

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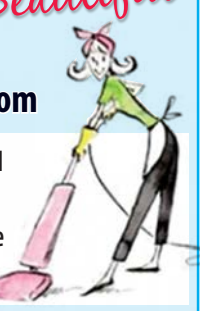

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After a tumultuous year, displaced Iraqi Christians face 'ambiguous future'

By Sean Savage/JNS.org

The past year was arguably one of the worst in recent memory for many members of the Middle East's beleaguered Christian minority, as hundreds of thousands were forced by the Islamic State terror group to flee their homes in what is being described as a genocide.

"It is genocide when you take over an area and strip people of their homes [and] their lives, and send them to an ambiguous future," said Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, the largest city in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Warda, an Iraqi-born Christian who presides over 200,000 Christians and heads up church-run relief efforts in the region, spoke with JNS.org on Christmas Eve from his post just miles from the frontline of the battle against Islamic State.

"[Islamic State is] destroying their churches, their homes, their manuscripts," Warda said. "It is trying to destroy our whole past and the vast contributions we have had to this country. At the same time it is destroying the future, because [the area's Christians] wake up in the morning with emptiness and go to sleep at night with emptiness. Their past, present, and future is killed."

Islamic State jihadists conquered wide swaths of northern Iraq last summer, displacing more than 1.8 million Iraqis, including Christians, from their ancient homelands. According to estimates, more than 125,000 Christians from the city of Mosul and the Nineveh Plains region were displaced.

This displacement occurred in two waves, the first beginning on June 10, when Christians fled Mosul to nearby Christian villages after the Iraqi army fled and the Islamic State took over the city. Then, on July 17, the remaining Christians in Mosul were given the ultimatum to either leave, pay jizya (an Islamic tax on minorities), convert to Islam, or face death, leading to a final exodus of Mosul's Christians on July 19.

Reports indicate that after Christians were forced to abandon their homes, the homes were looted by their former neighbors and friends while Islamic State jihadists burned, destroyed, and looted churches, monasteries, and public buildings belonging to Christians. The jihadists also destroyed or sold off centuries-old manuscripts and other historic artifacts belonging to Christians.

Subsequently, Islamic State forces advanced on other Christian villages in the Nineveh Plains such as Quaraqosh, Alqosh, and Telkeff. Kurdish Peshmerga forces, who had been fighting Islamic State in the region, also fled, ceding the Christian villages to Islamic State and forcing nearly 100,000 Christians to seek refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The displacement of Iraqi Christians may spell the end of one of the oldest religious communities in the world. Most Iraqi Christians belong to an ethnic group known as the Assyrians, a people considering themselves to be direct descendants of the numerous ancient Mesopotamian civilizations such as the Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, who were mentioned frequently in the Bible.

Christianity was first brought to modern-day Iraq by Jesus's Apostle St. Thomas during the 1st century CE, making it one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. Christians formed the majority of the country's population until the 14th century. The region's Christians have since subdivided into a number of churches, with the Chaldean Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East forming the largest denominations.

Prior to 2003, it is believed that the Iraqi-Christian population was 1.3-1.5 million. Before the current violence began, that number was estimated to be 250,000-400,000, with most Christians living in Mosul and in the villages of the Nineveh Plains, where there has been a continuous Christian presence for 2,000 years.

CREDIT: AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED (ACN)

Displaced Christians in cramped living conditions in Erbil, the largest city in Iraqi Kurdistan

Despite the current threats of annihilation, Iraqi Christians are continuing to fight to preserve the customs, culture, and languages of the area's past. Since fleeing to Kurdistan, many of the Christian IDPs (internally displaced people) have turned to their churches and humanitarian relief organizations for help.

One of the humanitarian groups active in the region is the Catholic charity organization Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). Founded in 1947 by Dutch Catholic priest Father Werenfried van Straaten to assist World War II refugees, the United Kingdom-based group is a Vatican-affiliated agency with offices in more than 20 countries. ACN is active in a total of more than 140 countries, with funds being raised in each individual country.

"Since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria in 2011 and in the wake of the 'Arab Spring'—developments that have thrown the entire Middle East into turmoil—Aid to the Church in Need, which supports the persecuted and suffering Church in more than 140 countries around the world, has committed significant resources to the region, focusing in particular on vulnerable Christian communities in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, providing some 10 million Euros in urgent aid," Edward Clancy, ACN's director of outreach, told JNS.org.

ACN garnered headlines last month when Prince Charles of Wales issued a video statement ahead of a release of an ACN report on religious freedom.

"It is an indescribable tragedy that Christianity is now under such threat in the Middle East—an area where Christians have lived for 2,000 years, and across which Islam spread in 700 AD, with people of different faiths living together peaceably for centuries," Prince Charles said in the video.

According to the ACN religious freedom report, Christians—especially those in the Middle East—are the most persecuted faith group in the world. In Iraq, ACN has focused on providing urgent humanitarian support to the numerous displaced people.

"An important effort of our emergency response now focuses on the more than 100,000 displaced Iraqi Christians currently stranded in Iraq. Aid to the Church in Need works closely with the bishops of the affected communities in providing housing, building schools, and meeting the daily food, hygiene, and medical needs of many thousands of vulnerable families," Clancy told JNS.org.

According to a report compiled by Chaldean Catholic and other Christian leaders in Iraq that was made available to JNS.org, the Christian IDPs face a number of immediate problems, such as diminishing warehouse food supply, housing shortages, and medical needs for chronically ill patients, as well as a lack of schooling for thousands of youths.

At the same time, the report stated that the Christian IDPs are in need of long-term aid to build suitable family housing so that they can stay and find job opportunities, in addition to funding to enable Christian students to pursue higher education. The report stated that aid in these two areas would "enhance Christian existence and contribution in the life of the new Iraqi society."

Church officials said in the report that many of the Christian IDPs have yet to cope with the social and psychological challenges arising from their traumatic situation, citing a number of challenges such as growing depression, anger, and isolation resulting from cramped and crowded living conditions, as well as little hope of being able to return to their homes in the near future. Without solving these long-term issues, church officials fear that increasing numbers of Christians will begin to permanently leave Iraq.

Pope Francis has frequently spoken out in solidarity with Mideast Christians and their plight. During a recent visit to Turkey, he issued a joint declaration with his Orthodox Christian counterpart, Partiarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, saying, "We cannot resign ourselves to a Middle East without Christians."

In a letter before Christmas, Pope Francis urged Mideast Christians to remain steadfast in the face of the emergence of "newer and disturbing" terrorist organizations.

"I write to you just before Christmas, knowing that for many of you the music of your Christmas hymns will also be accompanied by tears and sighs," the pontiff wrote.

The modern persecution and expulsion of Iraq's Christian and other minorities draws many parallels to the waves of attacks on, and eventual expulsion of, Iraq's Jewish community during the mid-20th century. Nearly 135,000 Jews were forced to leave from 1948 onwards.

"Many families do remember what happened to the Jews back in 1948," Archbishop Warda told JNS.org. "My parents remembered it well and were in the same neighborhood. When the Jews left, they warned the Christians, 'Sunday comes after Saturday.'"

CREDIT: AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED (ACN)

Displaced Iraqi Christian children in Erbil, the largest city in Iraqi Kurdistan, hold a sign for the Catholic charity organization Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)

Archbishop Warda said that members of the older generation frequently describe how they are witnessing history repeat itself.

"That generation still recalls the events and say what is happening now is exactly what happened to the Jewish community," he said. "They were stripped of everything, just like we are being erased today."

Similarly, today's Iraqi Christians are being persecuted by their long-time Muslim neighbors.

"The demolishing of the relationships with their neighbors is terrible," Warda said. "It was their neighbors who betrayed them. … Our people contributed a lot of the Iraqi civilization and deserve better."

While recent reports suggest that the U.S.-led military campaign in the region has had limited success, with more than 1,000 jihadists being killed in airstrikes in Syria since September, Kurdish Peshmerga forces have met stiff resistance from Islamic State in their efforts to liberate areas of northern Iraq that are home to the Christians and Yazidi minorities. Meanwhile, the Iraqi army, with the support of U.S. forces, has made slow progress in Iraq's Anbar province.

"I am really afraid about the future," Warda said. "There will be a presence of the Christians, but how effective this presence will be is really a question. As a Christian I am naturally hopeful. Let's pray that things will be better in the coming year." ■

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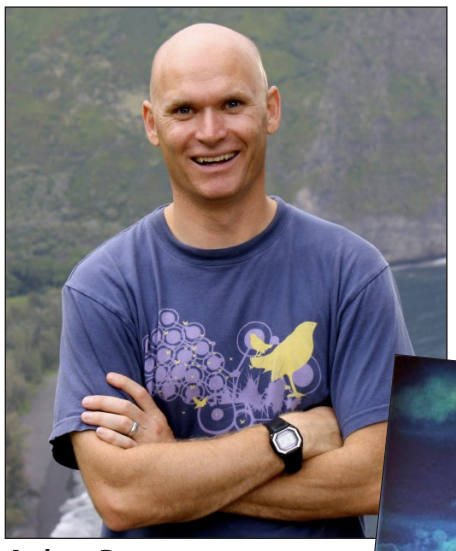
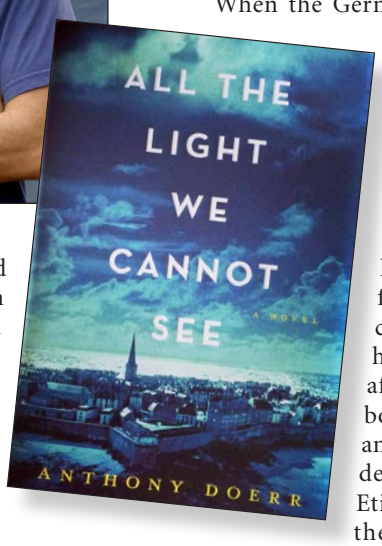
A gripping tale of moral complexity

Rachel Urist, staff writer

Last fall, Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See* became a finalist for the National Book Award. The novel, which has been on book club lists across the country, is a gripping tale of moral complexity. Set largely during the Nazi era, the book neither trivializes nor exploits its subject, but focuses on the story's non-Jewish protagonists.



Anthony Doerr



They are: (1) Marie-Laure, a blind girl who lives with her father in Paris. She is six years old when we first meet her. Her father, a museum locksmith, guards its treasures. But his greatest treasure is his daughter. His devotion is breathtaking. (2) Werner, a German orphan, recruited by the Nazis for his startling and precocious skill with radios. He is eight years old when we meet him. (3) Sergeant Major von Rumpel, a sixty-nine year old German officer determined to find and procure for the Fuhrer a legend-infused diamond, high on the Reich's list of desired treasures. Early in the book this officer is diagnosed with cancer. The irony of his situation ripples through the book. Through most of the tale, which takes us through the war years and beyond, we don't know when or how von Rumpel will die, but unlike this wretched functionary, we know that the gem he hunts has been in the custody of Marie-Laure's father. Meanwhile, the search is on, life is uncertain, and time is limited.

The word "holocaust" is used only once in the novel, to describe the devastation of the French seaport city of Saint Malo, where Marie-Laure and her father find refuge. At war's end, the city looks like "a holocaust of crimson and carmine." Doerr's descriptions evoke visions of the crematoria. There are "multiple towers of smoke." The largest has "curdled" into a pillar… like a cloud "of ash and steam." The author presumes that readers are aware of the period's horrors and feels no need to delineate them, yet the writing is replete with evocative, if not explicit images. Doerr's novel is a piece of historical fiction that zeroes in on the difficulties of remaining upright (literally and figuratively) in time of war, when sometimes it is wise to toe the party line. Yet in this story, circumstances summon integrity even at risk of the ultimate price.

In the compelling stories of the young Marie-Laure and Werner, there is hope. When the Germans invade France, Marie and her father flee. They find succor in the sparse household within the stone mansion of Marie's great-uncle, Etienne. He never leaves the house. He suffers from what we now call PTSD. The family housekeeper looks after him. Eventually, both the housekeeper and Marie's father are deported. Marie and Etienne must fend for themselves. The girl offers her uncle a new lease on life. He musters his long dormant electronic skills, resurrects his hidden, old radio, and faces the world. With his niece's support and encouragement, he helps the resistance.

Young Werner, meanwhile, has been corralled into the Hitler Youth movement and sees state-sanctioned bullying first-hand. His best friend falls prey to the bigger boys and their sadistic, militaristic teachers. Werner jumps at the chance to escape the school when tapped to use his radiographic expertise for the German war effort. As long as he can't see the consequences of his radio diagnostics, he is a dutiful young Nazi. But he can distinguish right from wrong, and at the moment of truth, he chooses bravely. Years later, when his sister seeks information regarding her brother's activities, loyalties, and wartime whereabouts, she says—fearing to hear the worst: "It was not easy to be good."

The protagonists' trajectories intersect, as expected. But there is nothing predictable about how these figures meet. Those episodes are rife with suspense and surprise. The young people's grit is fixed by the loving encouragement they received. Marie's father endowed her with confidence. His devotion gives her strength and stamina. Werner's beloved sister, left behind in the orphanage, remains his internal compass.

The author's often dazzling prose provides us with a visceral sense of these characters' histories. We accompany the blind, eight-year old Marie and her father on their walks, and we see the world through her sightless eyes: "*Twenty-two paces down the rue Vauborel to the rue d'Estrees. Then right for sixteen storm drains. Left on the rue Robert Surcouf. Nine more storm drains to the bakery.*" As she passes each landmark, we hear the tap tap tap of her walking stick. When the challenge seems overwhelming, her father urges her on, comforting her with a tender "ma chérie."

> *"Take us home.*
> *But I can't possibly!*
> *You have your cane. You know where you are.*
> *I do not!*
> *You do. … Calm yourself, Marie. One centimeter at a time. …Use logic. Which way should we go first?"*

She squats on the sidewalk to get her bearings. She smells the cedars of the Jardin des Plantes nearby. She feels the Metro underfoot. She hears the clacking branches from the gardens behind the paleontology gallery of the museum. Suddenly, she knows exactly where she is. "We go left," she tells her father. Upon their return home,

> *"…her father's hands are in her armpits, swinging her up, and Marie-Laure smiles, and he laughs a pure, contagious laugh, one she will try to remember all her life, father and daughter turning in circles on the sidewalk in front of their apartment house, laughing together… "*

Determined that her intellectual development keeps pace with her gifts, the father has her learn Braille. For her ninth birthday, he gives her a book: *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Doer names that gift-giving chapter "Light." For her tenth birthday, Marie's father presents her with the book that becomes central to her well-being—and ultimately, to her survival. She reads it with her fingers: "*Twenty. Thousand. Leagues. Under. The. Sea.*"

The book that changes Werner's life is *The Principles of Mechanics* by Heinrich Hertz.

> *"He discovered the book in the church basement, water-stained and forgotten, decades old, and the rector let him bring it home. Electricity, Werner is learning, can be static by itself. But couple it with magnetism, and suddenly you have movement—waves. Fields and circuits, conduction and induction. Space, time, mass. The air swarms with so much that is invisible!"*

Still a child, he devours the book. The boy becomes proficient at math, deft with electrical wires, and guaranteed to fix any radio. He imagines himself a future engineer. He tries to picture the infrared light that no one can see. He is entranced by science, by technology that allows people to speak to each other across great distances. By age fourteen, Werner has understood the philosophical import of the transmitters he can assemble and disassemble at will. The military equipment that he commands gives him access to words from many fronts. "Whenever he can, Werner records what the partisans say on magnetic tape." He becomes a student of human behavior. "Everybody, he is learning, likes to hear themselves talk. Hubris, like the oldest stories." Still later, he understands the import of the absence of sound. "Silence," writes Doerr, "is the fruit of the occupation." The comfort Werner finds in hard science stands in grim contrast to the chaos all around.

This book is an affirmation of the universal longing for peace and harmony despite the ubiquity of human cruelty. The book also testifies to human resilience. But it does so while carrying a cautionary note. No one is immune to cowardice in the face of horror. The best among us are prey to inertia, fear, and conformity. But it's just as true that we are endowed with the capacity to do the right thing. None of us can know, until the moment of truth, which way we will turn. ■

AADL to host talk by author Marion Blumenthal Lazan

Tim Grimes, special to the WJN

On Thursday, February 12, from 7–8:30 p.m., The Ann Arbor District Library will host a talk by Holocaust survivor and author Marion Blumenthal Lazan. Lazan's book, *Four Perfect Pebbles,* is a memoir for young people about her family's struggle to survive the horrors of the Nazis. Lazan will share her message of understanding and tolerance through recounting her experience as a young girl interned by the Nazis during WWII.

Born in Germany, Marion Blumenthal Lazan and her family were attempting to escape through Holland when the country fell to the Nazis. Her family spent more than six years imprisoned in various refugee and labor camps, including Bergen-Belsen. Shortly after their release, her father died of typhus contracted while in the camp. Three years later, at age 13, Lazan emigrated to the United States with her mother and sister, ready to start a new life in Illinois.

The talk will take place at the Downtown Library, 4th Floor Meeting Room, 343 S. Fifth Avenue. The talk is for adults, teens and youth (grade 4 and up).

For more information, call 327-8301 or visit the AADL website at aadl.org. This event includes a book signing and books will be for sale. ■

Keeping time, continued from page 1

you keep track of personal and religious dates? Why does it matter? These are some of the questions that will be addressed."

Rosen's publications include *The Wonder of Their Voices: The 1946 Holocaust Interviews of David Boder* and *Sounds of Defiance: The Holocaust, Multilingualism and the Problem of English*. Born and raised in Los Angeles and now living in Jerusalem, he was educated in Boston under the direction of Elie Wiesel. Rosen has held fellowships and taught at numerous prestigious institutions, most recently serving as the Wilkenfeld Scholar in Holocaust Education in Sydney, Australia. He also lectures regularly on Holocaust Literature at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies and other Holocaust study centers.

Ultimately, Rosen says, his research on the Holocaust sheds light on remarkable perseverance.

"I am particularly drawn to how Jewish victims brought meaning to their experience, stage by stage, as it unfolded," he said. "It is crucial to learn about strategies of continuity in the midst of tremendous upheaval."

Alan Rosen's lecture, "Killing Time, Saving Time: Calendars and the Holocaust," is free and open to the public. The Frankel Center is located at 202 South Thayer Street. ■.

Musician, actor, merchant, Jeffrey Pickell

Sandor Slomovits, staff writer

Jeffrey Pickell is familiar to many in Ann Arbor for his musical and theatrical talents, and also as the longtime owner of Kaleidoscope Books. He has been in plays and musicals at Civic Theater, Performance Network, and the Comic Opera Guild, and, along with his wife, Deborah, has sung in the music groups Chaverim B' Shirim and Sacred Song. Kaleidoscope Books sells vintage and rare books and magazines and other collectibles. Pickell is very personable and a natural storyteller; our conversation ranged from the musical aspects of his life, and also to many other subjects.

Pickell: My father loved music. He played piano, violin, flute, anything. He wasn't very good at any of them, because he never took a lesson, but he could play anything by ear. When we were growing up, my brother and I, we used to sing. My brother was four years older, he was the lead singer and I would harmonize with him. We became the first choir of kids in the Conservative Temple in Brooklyn.

When we moved to Long Island from Brooklyn, my father was one of five members who started a synagogue, and we were the first choir in that synagogue.

WJN: Did you play instruments?

Pickell: I played piano and harmonica.

WJN: Self-taught?

Pickell: Self-taught. You hum it, I can play it. When friends would come over my father would say, "Let my sons sing for you." We even sang Christmas Carols, made money on the street. We'd shovel walks and sing Carols. I would do the shoveling; my brother would collect the money… (laughter).

I was in All-State choirs in school, we even had Peter J. Wilhousky conduct one time. (Wilhousky was a popular composer and choral director, perhaps best known for his "Carol of the Bells.") But I didn't perform a lot. I loved sports more than I loved singing. I loved to sing but it was more about the relationship with my father that was intimate through music. He was a very busy man but he always had time to sit down and play the piano, and always wanted to listen to all of us.

I had a little doo-wop group, we sang Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, we thought we were better than them (laughter). We did Dion and the Belmonts, I remember loving to sing "Teenager in Love" and "Purple People Eater" and "Love Potion No. 9." My mother was an interior designer, and a good one too, and our house was spotless…you can see how I've taken after her. (Pickell laughs and points at his crowded store). My great grandmother had left me a baby grand piano. It was a beautiful rosewood piano, and I treasured it. One day I came home and it was painted white with teeny gold speckles. We had a little rehearsal, my friends and I, and when they saw my white piano with gold speckles they teased me and called me Liberace for the next six months. My mother had painted a mural and it matched the piano. (Laughter)

I had a full scholarship to SUNY at Binghamton at Harper College. I picked Harper because it was a real super liberal college, very active, it was considered the best liberal arts college in New York at the time. In school I didn't do too much music. I had friends, we played some music together.

Jeffrey Pickell

WJN: This was, after all, the 1960s.

Pickell: Sure. We played folk songs, went to a lot of concerts, we were longhaired, we were hippies, very political, I was fighting the draft very actively. I was one of the first Consciencious Objector petitioners without a religious reason. I had taken a summer job at a residential treatment center, a Methodist Children's Home, and I ended up becoming the director of recreation at the age of 19. The Reverend Schumacher there had the worst singing voice that I've ever heard. So, even though I was the only Jewish person at this place run by the Methodist Church, he asked me if I would help him with the Methodist services. So I ended up running the services with the hymnals that he had. I had only one condition. I said, "Let's make one out of every four services ecumenical. Let's invite other people." I did that for about ten years. I continued working in residential treatment until 1980, 1981, and then changed fields from being in education and came to Ann Arbor via having worked as a sales rep for Lee Jeans, (which is a whole other story…). I didn't mind selling, I enjoyed it. But I ended up going back to education, to residential treatment here in Ann Arbor. I worked for Huron Services for Youth. After six months as a teacher I became director of education for the whole program.

While I was doing that I tried out for a play, which really changed my life. I tried out for *Working*, a musical. I hadn't done a play since high school, and they cast me as one of the leads. At the first rehearsal I was blown away by the amount of talent. This was at Civic Theatre. I played a steel worker and had, to this day, the most important song I ever sang in my life, "Fathers and Sons." I sang that song, and it made people cry the first night. Nobody clapped for about a minute and I thought I had blown my entire career as a performer (laughter). One night Elise Bryant (well known in local theater circles in the '80s and '90s) came to the show and afterward she came up to me and asked, "How would you like to be in a show with me? I've written an original musical, *Our Time of Day*, and I need a very strong figure to play a slave owner. You'd be the only white person. Can you handle that?" I said, "I don't know, probably…" I read the script, came in that night and there, standing in one corner was Deborah. (That's another long story of our romance…). I ended up doing that play, and here I was, only loving music, never really acting, and I had a non-musical part. After that show though, Elise liked what I had done so much, she invited me to do her next show, which was *Work Song,* and I did get to sing a lot. We took that show, after the 13 performances at Performance Network, we took the show to Las Vegas. The Chemical Workers International Union hired us.

And, I started doing music again. I think I must have composed, in the last 30 years, 14 million songs (laughter). That's not an exaggeration. (More laughter) I'd go home every day and I'd say to Deborah, "What do you think of this?" And she'd say, "Don't ask me. Record it." And I'd say, "No, I never recorded anything." So I started recording some of them in the last six months, because with one of these handy iPhones you can record instantly. If you want a song with words made up instantly, I can do that. They're not great works of art, because I'm more a dilettante than a true artist who works towards perfection, but it's enjoyable at the same time.

Deborah and I got involved with Temple Beth Emeth. We sang for about 15 years, we both did solos, duets and then we started singing with Marilyn Krimm's Chaverim B'shirim. I think we've gotten to be well-known for doing duets, like, "Do You Love Me?" from *Fiddler*, or "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better," from *Annie*. We feed off each other so well, and blend together, that each of us is much better for the other's involvement. Recently we did a show at the JCC, and we sang, "One Hand, One Heart" and "There's a Place for Us." It's nice when people come up to us afterward and say, "You made me cry. I felt it inside. I just love hearing you and Deborah sing together." We sing with Marilyn twice a year and with another group, Sacred Song, once a year. We want to do that for the rest of our lives. The most important part of singing for me has always been my interaction with my wife. That's to me the miracle of our singing; whenever there is tension, or problems that every relationship has, the music draws us into a different place. I've been very sick this last year. I still went to rehearsals for Sacred Song and Marilyn Krimm's group. I managed always to be able to rehearse and feel OK and to have the energy and the stamina to perform.

WJN: Let's talk about the store. How long have you had Kaleidoscope?

Pickell: We opened in 1990. This was my hobby. I collected sci-fi, mystery, and when I had a child I started collecting children's books for him. We opened the store partially in response to the fact that Deborah told me that she was tired of not having windows, (laughter) because the books started to cover our windows. She said, "Would you like me to file them in boxes in the basement?' I said, "No, no, no." She said, "Why don't you open a store, you've always dreamed about doing it." I was still working at Huron Services for Youth so she opened the store at first, with my setting it up. I hired a carpenter, we built all the shelves. The store operated on State Street for the first 17, 18 years. The rents kept going up on State Street to the point of being more than I wanted to spend. I looked for other spots even though I was doing well there, and found this spot and we're much happier. It's smaller, it's more intimate, but I'm much happier in Kerrytown because I have a sensational landlord now.

My interest in doing this came from the fact that when I was younger I collected comic books, baseball cards and other odds and ends, and when I went to college my mother decided to get rid of everything I owned. She didn't throw it out, like most mothers would do, she gave it away, because she knew it was OK. (Laughter) When I came home the first Christmas everything was gone in my entire collecting world. I was real upset with my mother. When I opened this store I sent her a bill for $500,000. (Laughter) ■

Treats for Tu B'Shevat

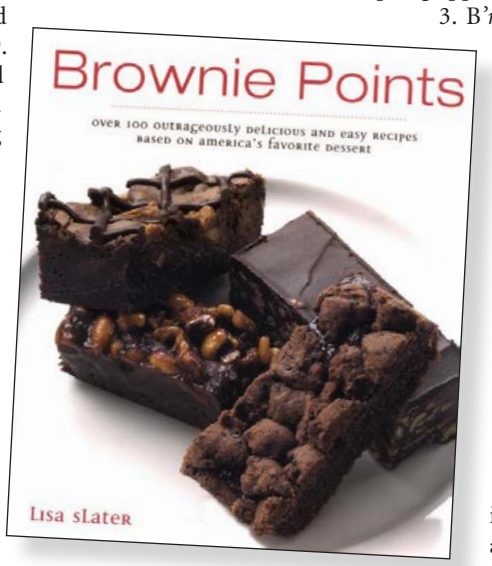
Mary Bilyeu, staff writer

The Jewish new year began in September. The secular new year, of course, was celebrated on January 1.

The "New Year of the Trees," Tu B'Shevat, begins on the evening of February 3.

While many people have generations-old family recipes for gefilte fish to serve at Pesach, or a family favorite apple cake for welcoming a sweet Rosh Hashanah, food traditions continue to develop for Tu B'Shevat. One possibility is to enjoy the *Shivat HaMinim*—the Seven Species — referred to in Deuteronomy 8:7-9. In this passage, the land of Israel is described as a home providing abundant nourishment and comfort:

"... a good land, a land with brooks of water, fountains and depths, that emerge in valleys and mountains, a land of wheat and barley, vines and figs and pomegranates, a land of oil producing olives and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, you will lack nothing in it."



Beautiful meals are often served for the holiday, with these named foods prominently featured. Salads, fruit and nut assortments, pilafs, tagines, and much more would offer a festive and delicious holiday feast.

Tu B'Shevat seders are becoming increasingly popular, as they give the opportunity to gather and celebrate in community. Four sections comprise a seder, at which symbolic fruits and nuts are eaten. Four cups of wine, each with its own meaning, are drunk, as well.

These parts of the seder are:

1. *Assiyah:* Fruits and nuts with hard shells but edible interiors, such as coconuts and pistachios, are eaten. This represents the world around us, from which we sometimes need to take refuge and find physical, as well as spiritual, protection. A cup of white wine, representing winter, is sipped.
2. *Yetzirah:* Fruits and nuts with edible exteriors but an inedible pit or seed inside, such as dates and olives, are served. These represent our emotional selves, our inner world and strength, and the potential for new life. The wine is mostly white, but slightly tinged with red to symbolize renewal as spring approaches.
3. B'*riyah:* Fruits that can be eaten in their entirety, such as figs, are enjoyed. Creation is honored, as are actions to conserve and to recycle in an effort to protect what has been bestowed upon us. Red wine, mixed with some white, represents further change in the seasons, and summer's abundance.
4. *Atzilut:* No fruits or nuts are offered. Spirituality is represented, with a spark of the divine in each of us being celebrated. The wine is now all red, as the seasons and the year and the seder are completed.

Even as we might serve samples of Israel's beautiful produce at Tu B'Shevat, we should also recognize our home away from home: the Midwest and, for most people reading this, Ann Arbor ... "Tree Town."

It's a tad chilly here, in winter, wouldn't you say, even as we celebrate a new year for trees that are now mostly bare? Baking is therefore a perfect activity for cold, snowy days—warming the house and offering treats to brighten the dark, damp dreariness.

So Lisa Slater's book devoted to decadence, *Brownie Points: Over 100 Outrageously Delicious and Easy Recipes Based on America's Favorite Dessert*, is an ideal reference for seeking recipes for Tu B'Shevat. Who doesn't love brownies, after all? Who wouldn't welcome them at a celebration of any kind? And how perfect would a brownie buffet be for Tu B'Shevat?

Chocolate comes from beans which are produced by cacao trees, after all.

Then add some bananas to one of the batters. These, like the beans, offer fruits within inedible shells. Tweak one of the book's original recipes just a bit by stirring in some cherries, a fruit with a pit that's not eaten. Choose a recipe featuring maple syrup, another local gift from trees. It's nice to celebrate Michigan and its own gorgeous trees on their symbolic birthday.

It is wonderful to have an opportunity at a meal or at a seder to appreciate all that trees give to us, from providing nourishment and shade, spices and building materials, a home for animals, and much more, all while sharing their strength and their beauty.

So be sure to serve brownies for holiday happiness, and as a wonderful way to warm up in winter. Tu B'Shevat is a birthday and a new year's celebration all rolled into one, deserving of rich, delicious brownies featuring some of the finest gifts that trees have to offer. ■

Flourless Brownies

2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 cup butter, in cubes
1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon cocoa
1 tablespoon molasses
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1/3 cup dried cherries
4 ounces pecans, toasted and finely ground
4 ounces whole pecan pieces, toasted

Preheat the oven to 300°. Grease an 8x8-inch pan and line with overhanging parchment paper.

Place both chocolates and the butter, sugar, cocoa, molasses and salt in a medium saucepan over low heat. Stir until the chocolate and butter are melted and the sugar, cocoa, and molasses are thoroughly blended. It's okay if the mixture is grainy with sugar.

Remove the pan from the heat and whisk in the eggs. The batter will be thick and glossy. Add the cherries and the ground nuts and stir well. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Top with an even layer of whole pecans.

Bake for 30 minutes or until the edges are firm but the center is still jiggly. Cool to room temperature and then refrigerate. These brownies are incredible when still slightly warm, unstoppable when room temperature, and densely chewy and delicious when cold.

Yield: 16 bars.

Hazelnut Cocoa Clusters

4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup maple syrup
1 egg
1 teaspoon hazelnut oil
1/2 cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons cocoa
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
6 ounces toasted, peeled hazelnuts
7 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Beat the butter with the sugar on low speed until smooth. Add the syrup and mix until completely smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the egg, blend well, and scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl. Add the hazelnut oil and mix until smooth.

Mix the dry ingredients together with a fork. Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture and mix on low speed until blended, about 2 minutes, scraping the bottom and sides of the bowl once or twice.

Crush the hazelnuts by putting them in a plastic bag and lightly banging with a rolling pin. They should be coarsely crushed. Add the nuts and chocolate to the cookie batter and stir them in by hand using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon.

Drop by tablespoon or mini-scoop, 8 to a pan. Bake for 12 minutes. Remove to a rack and cool.

Yield: 22 cookies.

Banana Brownie Muffin Cakes

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cocoa
1 cup sugar
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon salt
1 small banana, peeled
2 eggs
3/4 cup milk
3/4 cup milk
4 tablespoons melted butter
2 teaspoons vanilla
5 ounces mini chocolate chips
1 cup ganache (see below)

Preheat the oven to 375°. Spray vegetable spray inside muffin tin or line with paper liners.

Whisk together the flour, cocoa, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

In the bowl of a food processor, blend the banana, eggs, milk, melted butter and vanilla. Add the dry ingredients and pulse until just blended, scraping the sides to incorporate all the ingredients. Add the chocolate and process a second or two to incorporate.

Portion the batter into the prepared pan. Bake about 18 minutes until the muffins are domed and bounce back when pressed gently.

Let cool and dip the tops in barely warmed ganache.

Ganache:

2 cups heavy cream
1 pound bittersweet chocolate, chopped

Heat the cream to just below a boil, when bubbles appear around the edges of the saucepan. Pour it over the chopped chocolate and let sit for 5 minutes. Gently whisk until smooth. Try not to create air bubbles. To use as a glaze, cool (or reheat) to between 80° and 85°.

Yield: 24 mini muffins.

February 2015

Sunday 1

World Wide Wrap: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Gan Katan: BIC. 9:45 a.m.

Tu B'shevat Celebration: JCS. Celebration of the Trees at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, with a scavenger hunt, storytelling, and exploration of the conservatory. Parking fee is $1.40/hour or $5 per day (credit card or exact change). Suggested donation for Mattheai Gardens is $5/person or $3–$5/per child. 1800 North Dixboro Road. For information, visit jewishculturalsociety.org or email info@jewishculturalsociety.org. 10 a.m.–Noon.

Social Action Committee Meeting: BIC. 10:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Edible Home Landscape: AARC and Pardes Hannah. Local plant guru Erica Kempter from Nature and Nurture Seeds will educate participants on soils, seeds and trees needed to create edible landscapes at home. Part of series of sessions exploring issues related to Food, Land and Justice organized by Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation and Pardes Hannah, and funded by a 2014 grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. At the JCC. Pre-registration required at http://foodlandjustice-ediblelandscape.eventbrite.com. 1–3 p.m.

Monday 2

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Mondays–Fridays, 9 a.m.–noon. Mondays–Thursdays, 1–3 p.m. For information, contact jessica@jfsannarbor.org.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: TBE. 5:40–6 p.m.

Nosh and Nowledge: TBE. 7–8 p.m.

Tuesday 3

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Callanetics with Diane Dahl featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14/non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar with low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 monthly sessions for $10. 10 a.m. Homemade dairy lunch buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Games and activities including mahjong and quilting, including making quilts for children of Mott Hospital; 1 p.m. For information, contact Leah Zaas at leahz@jfsannarbor.org or by phone at 769-0209, or phone the JCC at 971-0990. *Tuesdays.*

Navigating Parenthood, the World's Hardest Job: Chabad. As parents, we are constantly bombarded with various educational approaches and methods. How do you strike the correct balance between discipline and freedom? This course answers these great questions by looking to timeless Jewish wisdom. 9:30–11 a.m. and 7:30–9 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6–7 p.m.

Tu B'shevat Seder: AARC. Pot luck dinner featuring fruits, nuts, wine and juice. Service will explore an ecological approach to the holiday that considers human interactions within a spiritual environment. To RSVP, phone 445-1910 or email caplan.carole@gmail.com. Meets at a private home. 6:30 p.m.

Tu B'shevat Seder: Chabad. Featuring a full seder of the special foods and drinks from Israel, a study session on the meaning of the day, and the Jewish prospective on ecology. 7:30 p.m.

"Nourish Yourself:" Jewish Women's Circle. Presented by Health Coach and Fitness Trainer, Darlene Sosenko, and Esther Goldstein. Meets at the home of Prue Rosenthal. For details, join Jewish Women's Circle Facebook group. $10 suggested donation. 7:30 p.m.

Mussar Group: BIC. 8 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Wednesday 4

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Hebrew 100: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Tu B'shevat Seder: TBE Sisterhood. 6–8 p.m.

Thursday 5

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Callanetics with Diane Dahl featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14/non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar with low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 monthly sessions for $10. 10 a.m. Current Events at 11 a.m. Homemade dairy lunch buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Also, monthly birthday celebrations. For information, contact Leah Zaas at leahz@jfsannarbor.org or by phone at 769-0209, or phone the JCC at 971-0990. *Thursdays.*

Nosh and Nowledge: TBE. Noon–1 p.m.

Jewish Yoga With Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Thursday Presentation: JCC Adult Programs. Hear the Happiness Boys sing songs fro Tin Pan Alley. For information, phone 971-0990 or visit jccannarbor.org. 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Detroit Lecture Series on Jews and Empires: Frankel Institute. Jeffrey Veidlinger, Frankel Institute Fellow, will present, "Pogroms and Anti-Jewish Violence in Ukraine's (Other) Civil War." Executive Conference Suite D in Dan & Betty Kahn Building on the Eugene & Marcia Applebaum Jewish Community Campus, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, visit www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/events. 7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5 per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. For information or to request a ride, contact Laura at a2rikud@gmail.com, phone 395-4223, or visit www.a2rikud.org. *Thursdays.*

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study from the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 6

Rabbi's Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6:00 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service/Caring Community. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 7

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Sixth Grade Led Shabbat Service: TBE. 10–11:30 p.m.

KidZone@Night: JCC. On select Saturday nights, parents will need to find something else to do! There will be games, craft-making, dinner and a movie for kids in grades K–5. Pizza and drinks included. $20. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasmow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

JCAE Films: JCC. View the film *Fill the Void.* 6:30–9:30 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 8

Planning Session: BIC Men's Club. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Family Salon: JCC and Jewish Federation. Painting on Canvas. For information, phone 971-0990. 2–6 p.m.

Habonim Dror Camp Tavor Information Meeting: Habonim Dror. Learn about the summer camp programs offered at Camp Tavor, a multi-denominational Jewish Summer Camp for 8-18 year-old campers focused on leadership, social justice, connecting to Israel and stewarding the environment. Meeting held at Kluger home, 2510 Kimberley Road. For information, phone Brittany at 224-619-5969 or email registrar@camptavor.org. 4:30 p.m.

Shir Chadash: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Kol Halev: TBE. 6–7 p.m.

Middle School Shir Chadash Café: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Monday 9

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. *Mondays.*

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4–8:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: TBE. 5:40–6 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 10

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Navigating Parenthood: Chabad. 9:30–11 a.m. and 7:30–9 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6–7 p.m.

Torah on Tao: TBE TNT. Off-site. 5:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Wednesday 11

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Hebrew 100: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: TBE. 5:40–6 p.m.

Sisterhood Series: TBE. Cyber Bullying. 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Thursday 12

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Jewish Yoga with Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Thursday Presentation: JCC Adult Programs. Adult Show and Tell with Jesse Bernstein of the Memory Preservation Lab, focusing on the theme, "Family Vacations." For information, phone 971-0990 or visit jccannarbor.org. 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Detroit Lecture Series on Jews and Empires: Frankel Institute. Devi Mays, Frankel Institute Fellow, presents, "Jewish Constantinople at the End of Empires." Executive Conference Suite D in Dan & Betty Kahn Building on the Eugene & Marcia Applebaum Jewish Community Campus, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, visit www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/events. 7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Friday 13

Rabbi's Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6:00 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service/Birthday and Anniversary Celebration at 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 14

Blood Drive: Brotherhood TBE. 8–11 a.m.

Gershowitz Memorial Shabbat: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Shabbat Morning Service: AARC. Participative community service integrates traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary English readings, including Torah service and discussion. Led by Rabbi Michal Woll. For information, phone 845-2361 or email ravmichal@aarecon.org. Held at the JCC. 10 a.m.–Noon.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 11:15 a.m.

Mini Minyan: BIC. 11:15 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 15

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Sunday Brunch: JCC. Featuring the Slomovitz Trio. Contact Karen Freedland at karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. 11a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Krav Maga: JCC. Segment II begins. Students learn the techniques needed to survive violent

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PHOTOBOOK MAGIC
with Susan Kravitz Ayer
Sundays, March 8, 15, 22 and 29;
10 a.m.–noon* *March 15 class will be held 9–11 a.m.

This hands-on, four-session workshop will show you a better way to preserve your photos and share them with friends, family and future generations. Learn to create a custom photobook, using your own digital photos and more.

Week 1: Getting started : How to select and edit your photos
Week 2: Layout and Design: Using online photo book sites
Week 3: Adding text and other elements
Week 4: Editing and Proofreading

The fee for this workshop is $120.
To register, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org

For more detailed information, email susan@susanayerphotography.com.
Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48108

aadl.org
Ann Arbor District Library

Four Perfect Pebbles
A Talk with Holocaust Survivor & Author
Marion Blumenthal Lazan

Thursday, February 12 | 7 - 8:30 PM
Downtown Library | 4th Floor Meeting Room

GRADE 4 - ADULT | Author **Marion Blumenthal Lazan** and her family spent more than six years imprisoned in various refugee and labor camps during World War II, including Bergen-Belsen. Marion will share her message of understanding and tolerance through recounting her experience as a young girl, the focus of her memoir, ***Four Perfect Pebbles***.

The event includes a book signing with books for sale.

For more information: 327.4555 or aadl.org

Calendar

or aggressive encounters, including knife defense techniques, gun disarming, getting out of choke holds, hand-to-hand defenses, how to survive on the ground, and proper psychology to be used during an aggressive encounter. $50/members; $60/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. 1–2:30 p.m.

Day Trip: JCC. Join the JCC on a trip to see *Once*, a musical, at the Fisher Theater in Detroit. Meet at the JCC at 4:30 p.m. JCC will provide transportation to and from Detroit. 4:40–9:30 p.m.

Kol Halev: TBE. 6:15–7:45 p.m.

Monday 16

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. *Mondays.*

KidZone Vacation: JCC. KidZone Vacation provides full days of fun and adventure when the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) and Hebrew Day School (HDS) have scheduled closures. Field trips and activities for kids in grades K-5. Today, kids will get to mix chemistry and physics in a fun way to blow things up! The Michigan Science Center will be bringing a presentation that kids will be talking about for days. JCC Member cost is $45 and community member cost is $70. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org, or phone 971-0990. Register online at www.jccannarbor.org. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Screenwriting Workshop: JCC. In a collaborative and supportive environment, participants will develop original story concepts as well as find and nurture their own voices as storytellers. Participants will write an original three-act feature length screenplay. Concept, character, dramatic structure and story will be emphasized. $300 for six monthly sessions. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. 6:30–9:30 p.m.

[E]met: An Honest Conversation About Death: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Genesis Green Meeting: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Tuesday 17

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

KidZone Vacation: JCC. KidZone Vacation provides full days of fun and adventure when the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) and Hebrew Day School (HDS) have scheduled closures. Field trips and activities for kids in grades K-5. For today's session, The Huron Valley Humane Society will be bringing in a dog, talking about the humane society, and ways children can get involved. JCC Member cost is $45 and community member cost is $70. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org, or phone 971-0990. Register online at www.jccannarbor.org. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Navigating Parenthood: Chabad. 9:30–11 a.m.

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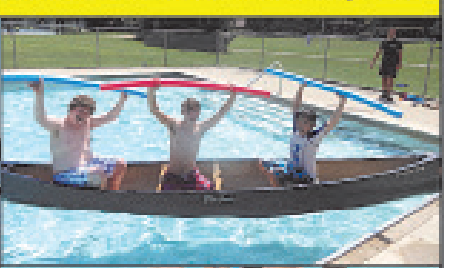
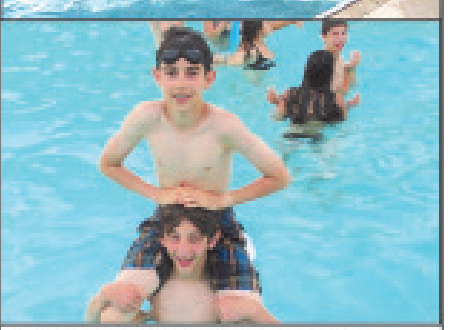
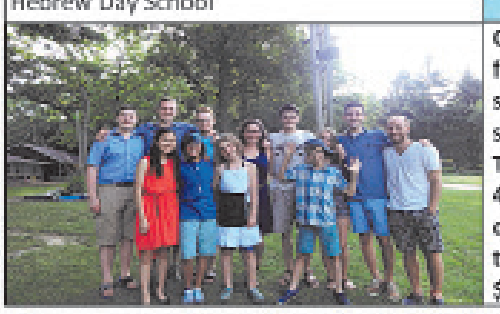


Learn more about Camp Tavor at one of these upcoming events!
Feb. 7 7:00-9:00 Community Israeli Dancing for alumni, campers and families
Feb. 8 4:30-6:00 Information meeting at the Kluger home (2510 Kimberly Rd.)
Feb. 9 3:00-4:00 Information meeting at Hebrew Day School





Campers have fun and make new friends while learning about leadership, social justice, connecting to Israel and stewarding the environment. Camp Tavor offers 5-day, 2-week, 3-week and 4-week overnight camp sessions for campers entering grades 3–12. First-time campers may be eligible for up to $1000 off of tuition.

and 7:30–9 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

"Killing Time, Saving Time: Calendars and the Holocaust:" Frankel Center. Lecture presented by Alan Rosen of the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem, and other Holocaust study centers. For information, see www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/events. 202 South Thayer, Room 2022. 4 p.m.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6–7 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Wednesday 18

KidZone Vacation: JCC. KidZone Vacation provides full days of fun and adventure when the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) and Hebrew Day School (HDS) have scheduled closures. Field trips and activities for kids in grades K-5. For today's program, Gym America will be setting up their equipment in the JCC gym for some gymnastics fun. JCC Member cost is $45 and community member cost is $70. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org, or phone 971-0990. Register online at www.jccannarbor.org. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Mahj: TBE. Off-site. 1–3 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Hebrew 100: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Thursday 19

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

KidZone Vacation: JCC. KidZone Vacation provides full days of fun and adventure when the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) and Hebrew Day School (HDS) have scheduled closures. Field trips and activities for kids in grades K-5. Camp Raanana counselor and art master, Michael McAteer, will present an art project with clay. Participants get to take home a project at the end of the day. JCC Member cost is $45 and community member cost is $70. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org, or phone 971-0990. Register online at www.jccannarbor.org. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Jewish Yoga With Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Thursday Presentation: JCC Senior Programs. Photography Workshop with Jane McShane. For information, phone 971-0990 or visit jccannarbor.org. 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Detroit Lecture Series on Jews and Empires: Frankel Institute. Eitan Bar Yosef, Frankel Institute Fellow, will present, "The African Journey in Israeli Literature and Culture." Executive Conference Suite D in Dan & Betty Kahn Building on the Eugene & Marcia Applebaum Jewish Community Campus, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, visit www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/events. 7 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Friday 20

KidZone Vacation: JCC. KidZone Vacation provides full days of fun and adventure when the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) and Hebrew Day School (HDS) have scheduled closures. Field trips and activities for kids in grades K-5. Participants will travel to the Imagination Station in Toledo, leaving at 9:30 a.m. and returning at 3:30 p.m. for a tour of the facility, plus a visit to the dinosaur exhibit. JCC Member cost is $45 and community member cost is $70. For information, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org, Kellie Cohoon at kcohoon@jccfed.org, or phone 971-0990. Register online at www.jccannarbor.org. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Rabbi's Lunch and Learn: TBE. Participants are welcome to bring lunch. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Levy Endowment Lecture: TBE. Featuring Keren McGinty. 5:30 –7:30 p.m.

Carlebach and Chicken Soup Friday Night Service and Dinner: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service/Sistrhood Shabbat at 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 21

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11 a.m.

Levy Endowment Lecture: TBE. Featuring Keren McGinty. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 22

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Krav Maga: JCC. 1–2:30 p.m. *See February 15.*

Kol Halev: TBE. 6:15–7:45 p.m.

Monday 23

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: TBE. 5:40–6 p.m.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Navigating Parenthood: Chabad. 9:30–11 a.m. and 7:30–9 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3.*

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6–7 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays. See February 3..*

Wednesday 25

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Hebrew 100: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: TBE. 5:40–6 p.m.

Thursday 26

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Jewish Yoga With Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Detroit Lecture Series on Jews and Empires: Frankel Institute. Joshua Cole, Frankel Institute Fellow, will present, "Jews in France and the Legacy of the French Empire." Executive Conference Suite D in Dan & Betty Kahn Building on the Eugene & Marcia Applebaum Jewish Community Campus, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, visit www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/events. 7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Beyond Pentatuch: The Rest of the Hebrew Bible: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Board Meeting: BIC. 8 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Thursdays. See February 5.*

Friday 27

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service with Worship Band at 7:30 p.m.

Fourth Friday Shabbat: AARC. Musical Kabbalat Shabbat services are held at the JCC and are led by Rabbi Michal Woll. Services followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner. Pizza nosh for children before services at 6 p.m. and childcare provided during services from 6:15–7:30 p.m. Reservations requested for pizza and childcare. Leave a message at 445-1910 or email info@aarecon.org. 6:30–10 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 28

Torah Study: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11:30 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 11:15 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m., followed by tot dinner. Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. Once a month Middle School Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. 6:15 p.m. at the JCC the fourth Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Pizza nosh for the kids at 6:00 p.m. Childcare provided during the service. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 975-6527, email mamacohen@comcast.net, or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candle-lighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma'ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. UM Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Congregation. Morning services held the second Saturday of each month at the JCC from 10 a.m.–noon integrating traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary readings including Torah service and discussion. A morning of songs and text study takes place the first Saturday of each month. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Friday night services at Shabbat candle lighting time. Saturday morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown. Call 995-3276 for Home Hospitality and Meals for Shabbat and Jewish Holidays.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study with Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m. Morning Minyan with Rabbi Delson and lay leaders at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. most weeks. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and Holiday. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Frequently listed phone numbers and addresses of organizations:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Shabbat Candlelighting

February 6	5:35 p.m.
February 13	5:44 p.m.
February 20	5:53 p.m.
February 27	6:02 p.m.

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More Dates to Save!

Kids Care Fair
Sunday, March15, 2015
from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Travis Pointe Country Club
Join us at this interactive, fun, family service-learning event!
Presenting Sponsor: Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation Youth Council
Activities include theatrical performance by Wild Swan Theatre, kids/family yoga, food pantry scavenger hunt, musical instrument petting zoo and more.
Event/activity partners include Beth Israel Congregation, Hebrew Day School, Jewish Community Center, Jewish Federation, Junior League of Ann Arbor, Temple Beth Emeth and more. **For tickets and additional information: www.jfsannarbor.org/kids-care-fair**

Issues for Aging - Nutrition:
Friday, February 20, 2015 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
at the JCC To register contact Leah Zaas at 734-769-0209 or leahz@jfsannarbor.org

Caregiver Conversations
The first Tuesday of the month
6:30 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. at the JFS
Upcoming dates: February 3rd and March 3rd
For more information contact Sharon Roberts or Leah Zaas at 734-769-0209

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Office of Community & Economic Development — Collaborative solutions for a promising future

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Vitals

Mazal Tov

Keren Maze on her bat mitzvah, February 7.
Jennie Lieberman on the birth of her grandson, Jay, December 8.
Judy Musket and Elliot Soloway on the birth of their granddaughter, Talya Doron Soloway, daughter of Daniel and Lana Soloway.
Ilana and Ari Gafni on the birth of their grandson, son of Iris and Adam Gafni-Kane.

Condolences

Liora Rosen on the death of her father, Jack Rosen, November 23.
Sam Taylor on the death of his sister, Shirley Young, November 19.
Ellen Katz on the death of her father, Martin S. Katz, November 20.
John Swerdlow on the death of his father, Al Swerdlow, December 10.
Steve Gerber on the death of his brother, Stacy Gerber, December 10.
Arthur and Karen Lindenberg on the death of their son-in-law Dan Kerr, December 13.
Barry Margolis on the death of his sister, Minnie Berman, December 15.
Maureen Kassof on the death of her sister, Shelly Sherry, December 16.
Monroe Hafter on the death of his sister, Ethel Hafter Atz, December 20.
Harvey Berman on the death of his mother, Ella Berman, December 21, and his father, Ludwig Berman, December 30.
Ann Gordon on the death of her mother, Marle Abramson, December 22.
Michael Homel on the death of his mother, Bernice Homel, January 8.
Donna Shewach on the death of her father, Henry Shewach, January 23.

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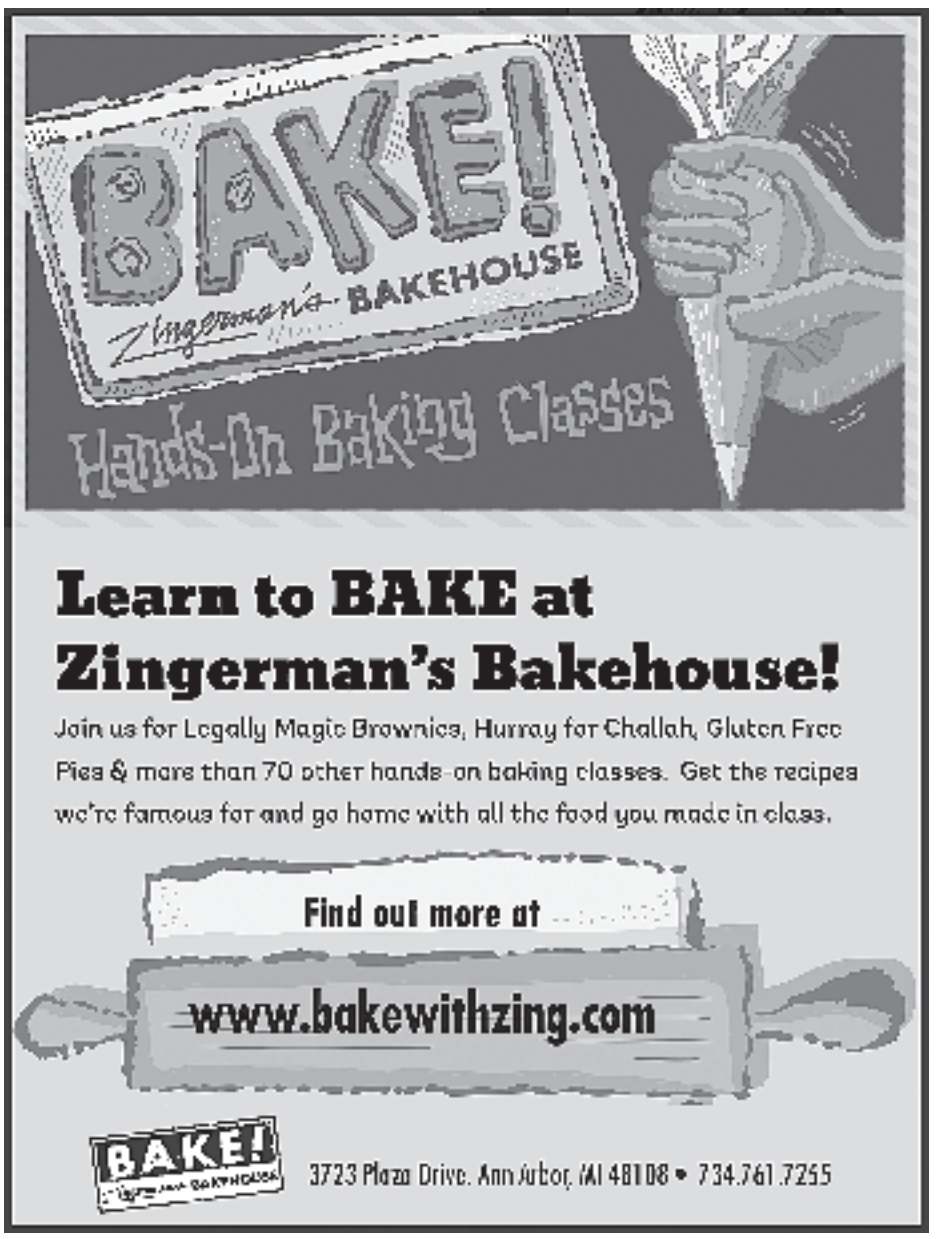

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director@mycampganisrael.com

www.mycampganisrael.com

734.995.3276 #15

Sylvie felt extremely cared for by her counselors. I cannot describe how grateful we are for the above-and-beyond kindness and caring they show for the children.

-Marc & Johanna

CAMP GAN ISRAEL

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 15.